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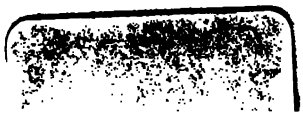
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THE

GUERRILLA CHIEF.

VOL. II.



THE

GUERRILLA CHIEF:

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY EMMA PARKER,

AUTHOR OF

"*Elfrida, Heiress of Belgrove;*"—"*Virginia, or the Peace of Amiens;*"—*and* "*Arestas.*"

——— I seek thy strand,
Romantic Spain! 'Tis but to while away
The lingering hours in Fancy's fairy land,
And frame wild fictions of thy latter day.
M. R. MITFORD.



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THE

GUERRILLA CHIEF.

CHAPTER I.

He spoke without a tear, but the sigh
Swelled in the midst of his voice.

OSSIAN.

MR. BURLINGTON did not return to Edenvale in the carriage, though it had conducted him from thence. He had descended before it reached Mrs. Melville's, as he was aware it would require some finesse to obtain a private interview with Honoria. On

quitting her he had ordered the carriage home, while he himself pursued the way across the fields, regardless of drizzling rain and pitchy darkness.

The next morning, at eight o'clock, Mrs. Valency left Edenvale. Ella and the Major accompanied her as far as Mrs. Melville's, where they intended breakfasting. Nothing was seen of Mr. Burlington, for whom Mrs. Valency left her compliments; but could not help partaking a little in the resentful sensations of Ella. He had absented himself the greatest part of the preceding evening, without sending any excuse for this inattention, and no one seemed to know where he was; till, on his being inquired for at supper time, his valet said he was gone to bed. Mrs. Valency had mentioned her design of setting off at eight o'clock, and though in the habit of rising much earlier, he had never

appeared to bid her adieu: in short, she left his house with sensations of the most unpleasant nature, and a resolution never to re-enter it.

How did Ella's heart ache when she took leave of her mother and sister, and saw them driven off from Mrs. Melville's. Honoria's pallid cheeks and inflamed eyes spoke a language too intelligible; though Ella knew not the additional perturbation that had been occasioned her by her interview with Mr. Burlington the preceding night; but Honoria felt unable to enter on the subject, or in any way allude to him.

Ella and the Major were reconducted on their way back, both silent, and moodily inclined. At length Ella said, "I cannot bear returning to Edenvale;" her husband did not ask *why*, but still continued mute. She went on—"Nothing can be more unpleasant to me than being an inmate

of Mr. Burlington's house, after his unjustifiable behaviour to my mother and sister."

"Do not say *unjustifiable*, my dear Ella; if you knew my brother as well as I do, you would feel confident he never would act in any way that he could not perfectly *justify*, was he at liberty to do so."

"I should be sorry to influence your mind against him, he has certainly fulfilled more than the duties of consanguinity towards you: and loving him as you do, you can the better judge what my feelings must be on seeing those I as tenderly regard treated with such indignity. How would you feel if my mother and sister, in our own house, had behaved towards him as he has towards them?"

"We cannot tell, my love, how far he may be to blame till we have heard some explanation of his conduct."

"He cannot explain it! believe me

he never will confess himself to be the character he has so often and so violently reprobated. No one could be more eloquent against those of his own sex, who play with the affections of women merely for a temporary amusement! Nobody could seem more to despise and ——"

"Surely," interrupted the Major, with sudden warmth, "you are not going to quarrel with him for his opinion of Sir Francis Heathcote, and for having treated him as he deserved."

"My dear Edgar," said Ella, affectionately taking his hand, "I thought we had agreed that that unworthy man should never again form the subject of our conversation."

It must be here observed, that on this luckless theme alone did the Major ever betray any irritability! but he never could hear the Baronet's name mentioned, or even an allusion to him, without shewing uneasiness. Ella had

repeatedly declared to him that she never had experienced a sensation for Sir Francis worthy of exciting her Edgar's jealousy; but still he had often reverted to the subject with something like reproach, which hurt Ella extremely, and he had promised to do so no more; but he now returned, in reply to what she had said:

"Is it then too *tender* a one to be touched upon?"

Ella's tears instantly burst forth, as she asked him "if he was going to be as unkind as his brother?"

Nothing the Major could now say or do was sufficient in his eyes to atone for having excited her tears. He reproached himself in the bitterest terms, and there was no endearing epithet by which he did not supplicate her forgiveness, and endeavour to convince her of the unbounded influence she possessed over him. He allowed that his brother was very

much to blame, and declared he could not feel a stronger affection for Mrs. Valency and Honoria, if they were allied to him by consanguinity. As to his brother's conduct, it was to him totally unaccountable, as he had confessed to him that he intended offering Honoria his hand; and had only resisted his inclination to do so till their acquaintance with each other was more mature, as he had always professed an opinion that the extremest caution was requisite in forming a matrimonial alliance. He had also acknowledged to his brother, when he stopped at Edenvale, in his way to Bath, that his only reason for not requesting permission to write to Mrs. Valency was, that he was certain he could not address three lines to her that would not be tantamount to a confession of the state of his heart.

After mentioning this, the Major

continued, " I laughed at his prudence, when he declared it would all have forsaken him, had he remained much longer at the cottage; that it was a good thing he was obliged to go to Bath, yet he should not be happy till he got back again. After this," pursued the Major, " is it to be wondered at that I should rally Honoria, as if confident she would shortly be my brother's wife? I saw there was something unusual in Spencer's manner the moment I beheld him yesterday, and I really thought his mind was occupied in endeavouring to find an excuse for immediately pursuing his journey to the cottage, and I was charmed with the idea of the delight he would experience on so unexpectedly beholding her. I never shall forget how I was shocked on discovering my mistake."

" *Shocked!*" echoed Ella, " I felt ready to sink ; but we are in the park,

and I have not yet told you what I want you to do. I hope you will have no objection to spending some time with my mother; for, under the present circumstances I cannot feel comfortable here, or behave to your brother as I would wish to do on your account."

"I do not think he intends remaining long, and it would be very shocking to his feelings if you were to leave his house abruptly; I cannot help thinking he will yet explain every thing to me, as I shall again solicit his confidence; if he does not, I shall not desire you to remain."

Ella returned, "I shall be perfectly satisfied if he opens his heart to you, and you but assure me he is acquitted in your opinion; I do not require to be made acquainted with any particulars he might wish to confide to his brother alone."

CHAPTER II.

If we were bred in infancy together,
If I partook in all thy youthful griefs,
And every joy thou knew'st was doubly mine;
Then tell me all the secret of thy soul?

HANNAH MOORE.

MR. BURLINGTON had not appeared when his brother returned; he had taken his breakfast in his study, and *there* the Major sought him. He was reclining on a sofa drawn near the fire, with a newspaper in his hand; the tea equipage still remained before him, he rung for it to be removed as his brother entered. The Major expressed an apprehension that he was unwell, from his not having appeared to bid Mrs. Valency adieu. Spencer

returned, that he had overslept himself, or certainly should have been present at Mrs. Valency's departure.

"I am very sorry you were not," said the Major, "as it must have added much to the mortification I am sure she experienced."

"Why, surely I said every thing I could to induce her to stay."

"Allowed, my dear Spencer, but you *did* nothing."

"Why, what ought I to have done?"

"O pray let this strange unusual reserve be banished from our intercourse! I know your heart too well to doubt for a moment that your actions spring from a blameless source, and why will you not candidly confess the reason of your estrangement from Honoria, who, so short a time since, you certainly considered as your future wife?"

Spencer's colour heightened, but,

after a few moments silence, he replied, " We cannot always account for the revolutions in our feelings! upon reflection, I do not think I should derive either happiness or comfort from the married state; and, therefore, think it wisest to retain my liberty. My disposition is too gay and volatile; I should certainly repent the step, was I tempted to take it."

Edgar stared at him in unfeigned astonishment—he scarcely could believe his ears; and well might he have doubted the evidence of his *eyes*, as he gazed on the mournful countenance with which his brother alluded to his gay and volatile disposition. Frankness *had been* one of the strongest features in Spencer's character! What miracle, then, had cast this impenetrable veil over his motives, of which nought was apparent but the desire of concealment?"

"What have I done," cried Edgar, emphatically, "what *can* I have done to have forfeited your confidence? I was once the repository of all your thoughts, and now I am not deemed worthy of being trusted on a subject which, it is evident, deeply concerns your happiness."

Spencer, as if from an irresistible impulse, caught his brother's hand, pressed it between his, while somewhat of commisseration was blended with the look of misery he cast on him; but he remained silent, though he seemed to wish to speak. His brother continued with augmented earnestness—

"I have no right, and Heaven knows my inclination would never lead me to censure you—then tell me, am I right in imputing your conduct to the influence of some new object over your heart."

"Ah! there," exclaimed Spencer,

"I can boldly assert that you wrong me! Inconstancy, at least, is not among my failings—that is," he added, as if repenting what he had said, "the love of change has nothing to do with ——." He hesitated.

"Then," rejoined his brother, "you have some entanglement in which your heart has no share."

"No, no, I am free as air!" exclaimed Spencer, starting up in violent agitation, yet with a miserable attempt to adopt a careless aspect; "free, free as air!" he repeated, "and never shall I resign my liberty, Edgar;" he continued, suddenly stopping and laying his hand impressively on his brother's arm." I never, *never* shall marry! rest satisfied with that assurance. Your children shall be mine! my property yours, and my house your home!"

"And do you think I can derive any satisfaction from such a declara-

tion? O, no! it distresses, it makes me miserable! There is *one* to whom you owe the offer of your hand! I need not name her, and still less need I remind you, that to present it to her, was once your intention, as you cannot have forgotten what you avowed to me on that subject. You must be sensible that you have made a deep impression on a tender confiding heart, which, relying on your sincerity, resigned itself without a struggle, confident that what was so eagerly sought could never be abused."

Spencer had reseated himself, and remained with his eyes immoveably fixed on the fire, while his brother was speaking. The expression of his countenance was exactly that of a person's submitting to some dreadful operation he was resolved to endure without a groan. Edgar continued; "you have too nice a sense of honour not to consider this subject in its true light. I

have so often heard you expatiate so eloquently on similar cases, that all I could say would only be an echo of your own words."

"Spencer cast his arms over the end of the sofa, and concealed his face on them, as his brother went on. "All that I implore, that I supplicate, is, that you would open your whole heart to me! I feel such confidence in your honour and integrity, I am certain I should find nothing to condemn."

Still was Spencer inflexibly silent, never even attempting to justify himself; but when his brother added, "There remains but *one* conclusion I can possibly draw! you have heard something to the disadvantage of Honoria!" Spencer passionately exclaimed—

"No no, I believe her to be the most perfect being in existence! but —but—" he hesitated; then suddenly

added, " O pray let the subject drop, to dwell on it can only prove alike distressing to us both! I have already given you all the explanation my conduct will admit of."

" How, my dear brother! I have heard none?"

" Pardon me, I have told you that I cannot account for the revolution in my own feelings. The solemnity of a death-bed scene, which I have so lately witnessed, has given a gloom to my thoughts, which they cannot recover. They revolt from the deceptious influence of gaiety, love, and happiness; which must all terminate so fatally; my breast can admit no anticipation but of that which shall put a period to all my worldly cares."

" O my brother! how are you changed! Surely it is impossible that such should be the effect, of a death-bed scene, however horrible, on a mind like yours. You have ever con-

demned as the weakest of all fears, the dread of our end, which, as the passage to eternal happiness, holds out to the virtuous, only an anticipation which may gild every preceding scene of life, instead of exciting despair.—No, I cannot believe that *you* could be the prey of melancholy, or become hypochondriac. O! that you had better known your heart before the peace of the innocent Honoria had been the sacrifice of your unequivocal attentions."

"Ah! *there* indeed I was to blame!" cried Spencer, starting up and traversing the apartment, as he added, with all his native animation, and acute feeling; "O it is like a blister on my brain, when I feel that I have done *that* which prevents my saying from my soul I am *perfectly* blameless, and unjustly condemned!"

He then entreated his brother to leave him, and to suffer the subject

they had been speaking on to be for ever banished from their conversation.

The Major found it vain to attempt penetrating the mystery that involved his brother's actions, which he could not for a moment impute to the cause he had assigned. Indeed his defence was so contradictory, that it impeached itself: he had talked of the gay volatility of his disposition being inimical to marriage, and had subsequently declared that the solemnity of a death-bed scene had given a gloom to his thoughts which they could not recover. In short, it was plain there was a secret which Spencer did not choose to reveal, and his brother could not acquit him in his own mind, because he could acknowledge no reason, why he should conceal it from him, with whom it would have been sacred. He felt extremely hurt at this want of confidence, and a thousand times more distressed at the cer-

tainty which was now apparent, that Spencer had completely resigned all pretensions to Honoria; and he rejoined Ella, feeling much inclined to sympathize in her sensations in regard to his brother. On learning the unsatisfactory result of the interview, she resolved on leaving Edenvale the next day, and her husband did not oppose the step.

Honoria had privately requested her sister to obtain her drawing out of Mr. Burlington's room, and to be cautious not to betray whose performance it was. Ella now deputed the Major to remove it when his brother was out of the way. She did not see Mr. Burlington till just before dinner, when she repaired to the drawing room; he met her with an apology, for not having appeared at Mrs. Valency's departure. Ella returned,

" She was sure her mother would very willingly dispense with any for-

mal ceremonies for herself; she had not expected he would appear, as he had remained absent nearly the whole of the preceding evening. Ella would not have addressed him thus, had her husband been present, but she was very glad of an opportunity of letting Spencer know what impression his conduct had made on her. He seemed to suffer much from her mode of attack, and said, he was so hurt at Mrs. Valency's positive refusal to extend her visit, when he had importuned her to do so the night before, that he had been quite unfit for society. Ella returned, that she was sorry it had been intruded on him. She spoke rather in a tone of regret than asperity, as her meaning was sufficiently pointed, yet it did not provoke an answer from Spencer, who sat silent, and miserable, but not angry. He seemed quite averse to entering into any discussion, but Ella

felt so warmly the indignity offered to her mother and sister, that she could not controul her feelings at sight of Mr. Burlington, nor address him in any other tone than that of disapprobation or indirect reproach. After a short pause she said, "I suppose Edgar has told you that we are going to spend some time with my mother."

"No," he returned, "but not immediately I suppose!"

"To-morrow."

"On my own account, I cannot regret it," said Burlington, "as I shall be here but for a few days; but you are soon tired of home."

"No, I wish to return to it."

"Then I suppose your husband's house is not yours. Edenvale is my brother's home, and as *such* you ought to consider it. You are wrong if you look upon me as the exclusive master *here*, or imagine yourself *my* guest. Edgar knows my opinion on that sub-

ject, and when I solicited him to make this house his residence, it was on the express condition that *his* wife should preside as mistress of it."

Ella could not define the feelings these words gave rise to; she was overcome, and scarcely could refrain from tears. She was sorry she had been so cross to Spencer, but suddenly recollected *who* ought, in her opinion, to be mistress of Edenvale, and her resentment rekindled.

The dinner passed in that sort of serious silence which denotes the parties discontented with each other, while a common-place observation was now and then hazarded, followed by a long pause, nor answered even by an assenting look. This scene seemed very likely to extend throughout the evening; but, after tea, the Major, in order that they might appear to be doing something better than pouring over their grievances,

said he would read aloud to them. Ella took out her work, and Spencer, leaning his head against the cold marble of the chimney-piece, soon evinced, by his aspect, that his thoughts were wholly abstracted. The Major found it was to as little purpose that he endeavoured to entertain Ella; for when he commented on what he had been reading, she looked as if she had not heard it. When Spencer retired, Ella asked the Major if he had procured the drawing out of his brother's room; to which he returned, that he had sought it, but that it was already displaced.

"How provoking," cried Ella; "Honoria will be so vexed if I do not take it to her; cannot you question him about it in the morning?"

"Ask him for it yourself, my love; no doubt he will give it you directly."

"Oh! I do not suppose he *wishes* to retain it. I shall certainly inquire

for it, for it is of great value in my eyes, and it shall be hung in our room, Edgar; *you* will have no objection to be reminded of the cottage?"

The affectionate husband kissed the trembling tear from her eye, and declared his brother deserved all that he appeared to suffer, for having suffused those precious eyes with drops of sorrow.

Oh! I should not have minded it so much," cried Ella, " had I not once thought him so superior a being."

CHAPTER III.

Ah! taunt me not! for I have that at heart,
Did you but know the very smallest part,
Would make you blush that you could add one sting
To sorrows, which from cureless causes spring.
E. P.

MR. BURLINGTON breakfasted with them the next morning, when Ella seized an opportunity to ask him if he had seen any thing of a drawing which his brother had left in his apartment? Spencer answered in the affirmative, and inquired if it was her performance? Ella said she wanted to copy it. Burlington was satisfied at her evading his question, as he was not at a loss to divine her motive;

but he took no notice of her implied desire of obtaining it, and she added;

"You will oblige me by permitting your servant to fetch it."

"He cannot find it; he took it down to preserve it from the dust!"

"I will thank you to give it me before I go."

Spencer only bowed; but the carriage was announced, and he had betrayed no intention of complying with her request, which she then repeated. He merely said, in a hurried manner, "You must excuse me," and preceded her out of the house, waiting on the steps to hand her to the carriage. On joining him she made another attempt to procure her drawing, adding, "It *can* be of no value to you."

"I am the best judge of *that*," he returned, as she permitted him to hand her into the chariot; and the

Major said, "Let him keep it, Ella, I am sure he will take care of it."

Spencer grasped both his brother's hands; he seemed unable to speak, and as he released him, he ran back into the house, without waiting till the carriage was driven off.

It would be hard to say, whether Honoria was glad or sorry to see her sister! She certainly required the sympathy and society of all her dearest friends to support her under the heavy stroke she had sustained, in the destruction of her sanguine hopes; but still Ella's sudden arrival spoke plainly the sentiments with which she had left Edenvale, and was the sign of the complete dissolution of their intercourse with Spencer Burlington. Every particular of his interview with his brother she learned from Ella; but *that* only threw a greater degree of obscurity over his conduct. Honoria, in return, informed her sister

of his visit to Mrs. Melville's, for perfect confidence existed between them, including their mother; but all were equally at a loss in interpreting Mr. Burlington's behaviour; and the only possible solution they could give to it was in ascribing it all to vanity. Honoria certainly felt gratified when she found that he had retained her drawing; but she resolved to make a vigorous exertion to banish his image from her heart: nor indulge an excess of feeling, which must have overwhelmed her, had she yielded to it. But her peace was gone; anticipation, hope, and joy, were dead in her breast, and their cold remains lay heavy on her heart, that now heaved but with pain and oppression.

All the relics Spencer had left at the cottage, she requested her sister to deliver to the Major, to take with him to Edenvale, when he should return; for to *return*, and very speedily,

he had resolved on before he had been two days at the cottage; but merely to *see* his brother again for a few hours, for he would not willingly have remained longer absent from his Ella; but he felt perfectly unhappy at the footing he was then on with a brother, to whom he owed so much, and to whom he was so tenderly attached. He could not bear the thoughts of having parted from him, under a mutual impression of dissatisfaction; uncertain, too, of when he might meet him again. Spencer had said, he did not intend quitting Edenvale till the latter end of the week; and the Major resolved to see him once more before his departure. Devotedly attached as he was to his wife, he could not but consider the cause of her family as his own, but to support it against one so bound to his heart by nature and affection, was a most painful alternative; and he

was anxious to adopt some middle course, in which he might adhere to the one without deserting the other; but, on the morning he intended setting out for Edenvale, he received the following letter from his brother:

" My dear Edgar,

" The precipitation with which you left Edenvale, and the preceding circumstances, so disturbed my imagination, I may say disordered my faculties, as to render me incapable of acting with precision or consistency. My purpose in returning home was to sign some papers of consequence, and make a clear arrangement of my affairs previous to the execution of a project it was my intention to have imparted to you; but our private interviews were of such a peculiar cast, that I knew not how to introduce the subject. I find that my mind requires change of scene and variety to restore

it to its natural tone, and am therefore resolved to devote some years to visiting such countries as the state of political circumstances will permit. I am ignorant myself whither I shall first bend my course, but I shall immediately leave England. It is impossible I can for a moment suppose that Mrs. Burlington, or yourself, could be desirous of hearing from me after the unequivocal evidence of disapprobation—nay, *condemnation*, which was manifest in your very look, word, and gesture, for the few hours I spent in your society; and I sincerely believe that you will be anxious to banish from your minds the remembrance of a man, who never can be reflected on but as an object deserving of the severest censure, and who therefore could never be recalled to your thoughts but to disturb them. When time shall have softened the asperity of your feelings towards me,

our intercourse may, perhaps, be renewed; but, until that be the case, no correspondence can exist between us productive of satisfaction. I shall take such measures as shall secure your being apprized of any thing extraordinary that may happen to me: and, in case of my decease, you will find yourself the nominal as well as legal heir to all my funded as well as landed property, with the exception of some legacies. The household here are prepared to consider you as their master, and to appeal to you as such on all exigencies. I shall add no prayer or wishes for the happiness and prosperity of yourself, and the family of which you have become a member, as their sincerity might with *apparent* justice be questioned: and He alone, to whom my heart is open, can tell *whose* welfare it holds dearest. I cannot forbear assuring you that I thoroughly approve of your having

evinced yourself so zealous a supporter of those to whom you are now allied; and Mrs. Valency must permit me to express how deeply I am penetrated with the sense of what I owe her. *She*, under all circumstances, spite of all appearances, was invariably the kind, indulgent, confiding friend, whose gracious aspect denoted that she could not admit a suspicion to my dishonour. Farewell!

"Your affectionate brother,

"SPENCER BURLINGTON."

We shall not dwell on the distressing sensations excited by the contents of this epistle in the breasts of those whom they so deeply interested, and to whom they held out the probability of never again beholding him, once held so dear, and still too much beloved. Edgar affected to feel less than he did; for to have betrayed the

real anguish of his heart would have been a tacit reproach to his wife and her family for having deprived him of a brother; and that brother had already been the cause of so much unhappiness to them, that Edgar thought he never could do enough to atone for it.

CHAPTER IV.

O! 'twas a task too hard for all my duty;
I strove, I wept, I strove—but still I loved!
HANNAH MORE.

HONORIA could not prevail on herself, for some time, to go near the marino; but, resolved to overcome every weakness of that nature, she one day, with her mother and sister, pursued the road towards it. She trembled very much as she approached the spot, but betrayed no other symptom of emotion. It presented a very different scene to what it had once offered, when every workman which could be procured was employed about it; now not the stroke of a

hammer was to be heard, nor a single creature to be seen about it.

Our trio passed on rather hastily; not a comment was made by either. Indeed, Honoria could not have spoken without bursting into tears. A little farther on they met a cottager. Mrs. Valency stopped him to inquire how his family were getting through the winter, and to direct him to apply at her house if they were in any distress. The man returned, that they had all got on extremely well till then, as there had been work for all hands in the erection of the new house; but that the fine gentleman, who had at first been in such a hurry for its completion, had suddenly ordered that it might not be proceeded with till the next summer, as it was already roofed, and he was in no haste to have it finished.

"So, ma'am," continued the man, "we are thrown out of bread at the

very worst time of the year; and I fancy the gentleman don't mean to live here after all, ma'am."

"*After all!*" was mentally repeated by each of the ladies, while they sincerely regretted that they had been induced to come that way. Honoria had been ignorant that the progress of the marino was stopped, and its *still* deserted appearance, with the gloomy cast given to the scene by a sombre winter day, was such a contrast to what it had once been, and offered so strong a similitude to the reverse in her own feelings, as almost to overwhelm her. Still she yielded not; and, after the struggle of a few minutes, she was enabled so far to resume her composure, as to acquiesce in her mother's proposal of calling on Mrs. Irby. Harriet was now perfectly recovered; and had, with her mother and brothers, returned to the neighbourhood a few days before.

But here a new trial awaited Honoria. Scarcely were they seated, when Harriet exclaimed,

"We saw your friend, Mr. Spencer Burlington, at Bath, looking handsomer than ever! but, first, I should have told you, that when I got better, we went to Bath to amuse ourselves."

"Yes," rejoined Mrs. Irby, the whole city was ringing of Mr. Spencer Burlington! to be sure he was rather notorious there."

"Now," thought Honoria, "the mystery is going to be unravelled;" and she listened with breathless eagerness.

"*Notorious!*" echoed Mrs. Valency, incredulously.

"O! I only mean that he made a great noise, and was a great deal talked of! but have not you heard the story?" resumed Mrs. Irby.

"No," I really do not know what you allude to."

"Well, it is very likely the newspapers would have informed you of it, if poor Lady Brookland had lived! You know, of course, that Mr. Burlington and Lord Brookland have been the greatest friends in the world ever since they were quite boys; and after his lordship married, Mr. Spencer Burlington used to be staying, as usual, very often at the house, and her ladyship agreed so perfectly in her husband's opinion, that she too thought Mr. Spencer Burlington the most delightful creature in the world; and, in short, as is frequently the case on such occasions, the husband's friend became the wife's lover—at least *so* it *was* in reality, though nobody suspected it."

Mrs. Valency could no longer resist interrupting Mrs. Irby, and she said,

"Surely, ma'am, you must be mistaken! you do not consider that you

are representing Mr. Burlington as an unprincipled libertine."

"Well, my dear Mrs. Valency, now only hear the sequel, and I am sure you will not doubt my veracity. This affair went on for some time, till I suppose Mr. Burlington got weary of the connexion, and, during last summer, he absented himself longer than usual, and her ladyship's jealousy was awakened, for she heard that he had formed another attachment. To be sure he was very attentive to Harriet at Weymouth, but how it reached Lady Brookland's ears Heaven only knows! however, it had such a violent effect on her, that she became quite deranged, and she herself discovered the whole business in one of her paroxisms. Then the husband became furious! but her ladyship continued in such a dreadful state, that he could not take any steps to avenge himself; and, being

a very good-natured man, he would not desert her, nor her unfortunate child, who I understand is the image of Mr. Spencer Burlington; but the poor thing is an ideot. His lordship took them both down to Bath, where he had the first advice for his wife, who got better; when he determined to institute a legal suit against Mr. Burlington, and be regularly divorced. But, when he hinted his intention to her ladyship, she became perfectly outrageous; she grew worse than ever, and was soon given over by the physicians. In her lucid intervals she implored her husband to apprize Mr. Burlington of her situation; and, as her last dying request, supplicated that she might once more be permitted to see him. Well, his poor lordship, who was almost out of his senses also, with what he had gone through, and who could not help attaching some blame to himself, for

suffering his wife to be continually in the society of such a fascinating object, could not refuse her any thing at such a moment, for he had loved her so tenderly. An express was sent off to Mr. Burlington, who was then down here inspecting his marines, and he arrived as soon as it was possible. The unhappy lady lingered about ten days, and then died in *his arms*, while her husband was carried out in a state of insensibility! Yes, indeed, Mrs. Valency, you may well look aghast! She actually expired in *his arms!* I was told so by the nurse who attended her."

A deadly sickness came over Honoria, her head swam, and she had only just power to raise a window, near which she was sitting; and presenting her face to the chill air, it revived her, and she retained her senses sufficiently to comprehend the conclusion of Mrs. Irby's relation, which

was to this effect: Lord Brookland, still devoted to his unworthy wife, had resolved not to sully her memory by publishing her infamy; so the matter had been hushed up, and Mr. Burlington had set off on his travels, in hopes of evading the stings of conscience.

Had this story been told by *Mrs. Irby* of any one in the world *but* Spencer Burlington, not one of her auditors would have believed it! but it corroborated so completely his otherwise inexplicable conduct, that they could not entirely reject it, though horrored while they admitted its possibility. Neither of Mrs. Irby's sons were present, either to confirm or contradict her assertions, but her daughter's assenting looks spoke the same language. Ella resolved to repeat every word of what she had heard to her husband, who she knew would take effectual steps for ascer-

taining the authenticity of this dreadful account, or proving it a detestable calumny. Honoria could hardly support her trembling frame as she proceeded homeward, while every recollection seemed to substantiate what she had heard, and she could think of nothing to oppose it, except the unclouded gaiety, and apparent peace of mind; so conspicuous in Mr. Burlington's demeanour while he remained in that neighbourhood.

"But," thought she, "the vitiated mind is not easily wounded! A man of fashion, a man of the world, might perhaps remain perfectly unconcerned under the weight of a crime in reality so enormous, and which he might imagine would never transpire."

But its dreadful consequences had at length aroused his slumbering conscience, and rendered him a wretched exile! She tried to congratulate

herself on having escaped a union with such a man.

"*Such a man!*" she mentally repeated, "O! wretched, unfortunate, most pitiable Lady Brookland! if an offence of so deep a dye could admit of any palliation!—but, no, no, no; faith, honour, principle, were outraged, and could never be appeased."

CHAPTER V.

O he's too good to 'scape calumnious tongue;
Detraction ever loves a lofty mark:
It saw him soar a flight above his fellows,
And hurl'd its arrows to his glorious height,
To reach his heart, and bring him to the ground.

HANNAH MORE.

THE Major listened in astonishment to Ella's communication, but without any of those attendant sensations which he must have experienced had he credited one word that he heard. When Ella ceased speaking, he said; "I am hurt, my love, that you should, even for a moment, appear to incline a credulous ear to such outrageous falsehoods! What a dangerous woman

is this Mrs. Irby; but, she shall retract what she has said, and be made to prove herself what she really is—I need not name it. Fortunately I have it in my power to confute her malicious scandal completely. Spencer, to my certain knowledge, had never seen Lady Brookland when he left us at Edenvale for Bath. This may appear to you very extraordinary, as he has been so many years intimate with her husband, and he has been married five or six years; but, that is easily accounted for. Lord Brookland had been married but a very few months, when his wife betrayed symptoms of mental derangement, which soon assumed a very decided cast, and it was ascertained that the complaint was in the family. From that time she became gradually worse, and was never in a state to appear before strangers.

"Spencer frequently spent months *together* with his friend, endeavouring

to console him under his bitter affliction, but he never saw her Ladyship for the reason I have already stated.

"The child, now four or five years old, has never betrayed any degree of intellectual light; this additional calamity, with the increase of his wife's disorder, was more than any human being could endure, unsupported by the sympathy of friendship. Lord Brookland sent off for Spencer, who, you know immediately obeyed the summons, and in the letter he wrote to me communicating Lady Brookland's death, he informed me that the distracted state of her husband, who had insisted on remaining in her chamber, had sometimes induced him to follow him into the room, in order to draw him from thence; he had then for the *first* time seen Lady Brookland, in a situation he would not pain me by describing, that the last scene had thrown her husband

into a state of insensibility; and, in the confusion of bearing him out, he (Spencer) felt himself called on to attend to the dying sufferer, whose last struggle subsided in his arms, as she expired on his bosom.

"These melancholy particulars," continued the Major, "I forbore to impart to you, my love, as I knew it would shock you, and you must have observed a degree of reserve in the manner in which Lady Brookland's disorder was always alluded to; for, delicacy and feeling prevents one's expatiating on such themes."

"This explanation is certainly perfectly satisfactory," said Ella, "I am shocked to think that your poor brother, who in this instance conducted himself in so exemplary a manner, should have been so vilely aspersed; but, this again involves his conduct in perfect obscurity."

"Thank heaven, 'tis not to be *so*

accounted for, and I will take care that every word to his disadvantage shall be retracted. But I must now tell you, (and this increases the obscurity that envelops my dear Spencer) William Irby called while you were out, and told me that he had seen my brother at Bath two days after Lady Brookland's demise; *mind, after.* He met him in the street; I inquired particularly how he looked, and if he appeared out of spirits. William said, that after he had ceased speaking of the melancholy event that had recently occurred, he had seemed the same as he had always known him, that he took a long walk with him, and found him as animated and entertaining as ever. He expressed his impatience to be with his dear friends at the cottage, and said they would put every thing dismal out of his head; and, that he only waited till his poor friend had set off from Bath, which would

be in the course of a day or two, when he should hasten, as fast as four horses could drag him, to Dorsetshire."

"How very extraordinary," said Ella, "but he certainly could not have left Bath when he intended, as he remained there nearly a fortnight after that period."

"Yes, but William said, he did not see him after that time, and imagined he was gone."

As the Major was one of those men, who can never form their mouths to reprehend a woman, and would have been quite at a loss how to call a female to an account, or make her answer for her conduct, he resolved to communicate with William Irby, and through him require an explanation of his mother's scandalous assertions, and the grounds on which she supported them, and insist on her refuting so infamous a calumny, and

taking every possible step to counteract its effect. In short, the Major was not at a loss how to address one of his own sex, on such an occasion, and he lost no time in seeking William Irby.

William was distressed, beyond measure, on hearing to what a length the *force* of his mother's *imagination* had carried her, and he was constrained to acknowledge, that he was convinced the whole story was founded on the strength of her own *conclusions*; for, that he had never heard a suspicion of the kind whispered at Bath. That Mr. Burlington had been so much engaged with his friend, that he had rarely appeared abroad; and, therefore could not excite much observation, or form the subject of conversation. William owned he had heard his mother express some strange ideas, excited by some intelligence she had got from her maid, who was

acquainted with the nurse that attended Lady Brookland; but he had instantly checked her, and he trusted she had not circulated these extraordinary interpretations. But the Major might rest assured, that every possible explanation should be given by Mrs. Irby. With this assurance, Major Burlington returned home, and he was happy to find each face in the domestic circle, wearing a more complacent aspect. Honoria was scarcely more rejoiced than her mother and sister, to find that this dreadful report had no foundation in truth. To connect the idea of Spencer Burlington with that of a profligate, destitude of honour and feeling; a wretch who could outrage virtue, and betray his dearest friend! O, such a union seemed an insult to human nature!

How eagerly, and with what extreme satisfaction, did that heart acquit him, which had been accustom-

ed to consider him as the standard of moral excellence. Yes, let the deepest shades of mystery envelop his actions in an impenetrable cloud, ten thousand times more gratifying that they should remain for ever so obscured, than be rendered clear and intelligible through the operations of vice.

The next day William brought a letter of four folio pages completely filled, from his mother to Major Burlington. It was full of apologies, excuses, and repetitions; intended to be explanatory, of what could not be explained; and by which, nothing was intelligible, but that she had fabricated all she had asserted (but which she declared she intirely discredited) from the conclusions she had drawn, on hearing that Lady Brookland had expired in Mr. Burlington's arms.

William assured the Major that

Mrs. Irby had written by that day's post to the only two persons, before whom she had expressed her suspicions, and completely contradicted them. As to Harriet, she had listened to her mother's suggestions, enlarged, and illustrated by subsequent animadversions, till she really admitted their *plausibility*, if not actual truth, and would not take upon herself to contradict them, particularly as she was not in perfect charity with Mr. Burlington, never having forgiven him for not having fallen in love with her.

The Major felt satisfied, in the consciousness that he had done all that could be done to clear his brother's fame. His exertions on that account offered no interruption to his friendship for William Irby: on the contrary, it rather augmented their mutual esteem, and William continued a constant visitor at the cottage, though a coolness ensued between its inhabitants

and Mrs. Irby, whom they found too dangerous a companion to be admitted on a familiar footing; though sensible that she had no malevolent intention. But her strange propensity to *substantializing* all her day dreams, and introducing them as stubborn facts; her unfortunate deficiency in the powers of comprehension, and her constant habit of drawing her own conclusions, and asserting their grounds with as much confidence as if they had Scriptural authority, rendered her in effect, as mischievous a destroyer of the peace of society, as if actuated by the basest passions!

CHAPTER. VI.

——————Who shall attempt to read
In Pompey's face, the movements of his heart?
The same calm artificial look of state;
His half-clos'd eyes in self attention wrapt,
Serve him alike to mark unseemly joy,
Or hide the pangs of envy and revenge.

CUMBERLAND.

SOME weeks passed on unmarked by any event worthy of being recorded. Honoria never refused to accompany the rest of her family in their visits about the neighbourhood; and however joyless the scene appeared to her, she complained not of it, conscious that it was the state of her own feelings that made it tedious and insipid. When she was at home she was con-

tinually employed, nor ever left herself leisure for the indulgence of her unhappiness; and though it might be said to mingle in all her pursuits, she certainly did all in her power to oppose its influence.

"But ties around her heart were spun,
That could not, would not be undone."

They were one day engaged to dine and spend the evening with a Colonel and Mrs. Skeller, who had lately purchased an estate in that vicinity. On reaching their abode, our little party found most of the guests assembled, and the foremost amongst them appeared Sir F. Heathcote!—Scarcely would he permit Mrs. Valency to pay her compliments to the mistress of the house, before he accosted her with great vivacity, expressed his pleasure at seeing her, and held out his hand (which they had no plea for refusing) both to her and Honoria. Few

things could have been more unpleasant to Ella than this *rencontre.* Not that she felt the least perturbation of heart at sight of Sir Francis, but she feared her husband might experience some uneasy sensations on the occasion, for it was evident the Baronet would not be met as a stranger. She had no pretext for behaving with such pointed rudeness, as to turn away when he spoke to her, which he did without the slightest embarrassment, congratulating her on her marriage, and going through the same ceremony with the Major, who bowed with stately reserve, astonished at, what he termed, Sir Francis's effrontery, and looked much more like the man who had been *rivaled* and *rejected,* than did the Baronet. Ella too, was a little surprised at the perfect ease with which the latter addressed her, and still more so, that he could so far get the better of the resentment he must

feel towards her husband, as to extend his complacency to him. Sir Francis sunk still lower in her estimation, from the persuasion that his conduct was the result of the most studied hypocrisy. He had arrived but the night before, intending to spend a few days with Colonel Skeller, in his way to an estate he possessed in an adjoining county. He had been very minute in his inquiries respecting Mrs. Valency's family, and was informed by Colonel Skeller, who had never heard of the Baronet's attachment to Ella, that he expected them to dine on that day.

Thus Sir Francis was prepared to see them, and was enabled to determine on the line of conduct he should pursue. Subsequently to the decisive dismissal Ella had given him, and his flight from Weymouth, he had suffered all the distracting conflicts of a violent passion and mortified vanity;

but had at length resolved to subdue the former, and endeavour to lose all remembrance of it, in the unbounded gratification of the latter, and to revenge the insult he had received from one woman, on all those of her sex who came within his influence.

The inexperienced heart of susceptible youth, or even the affections of the more guarded, obtained with difficulty, and resigned with reluctance, were not esteemed a sufficient sacrifice: no, the dearest ties must be burst asunder, the most sacred duties outraged, to yield an offering worthy of atoning for the wound that had been inflicted on self-love.

The joys of domestic life were to him denied, therefore, the connubial felicity of others was a prey worthy of his most vigorous pursuit. The intelligence of Ella's marriage, which he gained from the newspapers, did *not* produce so violent an effect on

him as might have been expected, though he denounced the bitterest curses on her husband, to whose early influence he entirely attributed his own disappointment. But just at that period his whole attention was devoted to a new object, whose reigning power, together with the nature of his views, monopolized his exclusive interest. It was not till four months after that he met the party at Colonel Skeller's. He knew Ella too well, to entertain, for a moment, any views derogatory to her prudence or honour, which he was convinced were invulnerable; nor could he conceal from himself, that she had never loved him with that degree of ardour which could permit him to hope he retained an advocate in her breast. But nothing, he was convinced, could more effectually annoy either her, or her husband, than to address them with the familiarity of

an old friend; and though it was out of his power to give the Major any solid grounds for jealousy, he might as completely arouse that passion, whose baleful influence would prove as destructive of their domestic peace, as if proceeding from a just cause. To interrupt or destroy the felicity built on his disgrace and temporary misery, would afford him the most superlative gratification. He knew he could not please Ella, and next to that, the delight of tormenting her was the greatest; his former love was now, as is generally the case in vitiated minds, converted into hatred, or something very nearly allied to it. She had not relinquished her husband's arm, but passed on with him, after replying to the Baronet's vivacious address, without any confusion. But very glad was she when she found herself at a distance from him, for she was distressed at her husband's dis-

turbed looks; but was soon relieved by observing his features relaxed, while he by degrees assumed the demeanour most natural to his situation, that of conscious triumph, and confident joy. Ella was delighted, her gaiety excited his, and they supported a lively conversation with the persons near them, till the dinner bell was heard, when Colonel Skeller presented his arm to Mrs. Valency, and directed Sir Francis to attend Mrs. Burlington. He instantly flew forward, at the moment Ella passed her arm through her husband's, saying, with a smile, she was an old-fashioned person, and would resign the Baronet to the single ladies. This breach of etiquette, particularly in one acquainted with the ceremonials of good breeding, probably excited surprise, but no comment was made on it, and Ella congratulated herself on the promptness with which she had avoided, what would

have been so extremely disagreeable to her. But the same rule of priority of rank, which had caused Colonel Skeller to appoint him to conduct her, placed the Baronet next her at table, and she heartily wished herself at home. Unfortunately, her other supporter was Jonathan Irby; and to get a word, like conversation, from him, while any thing to eat remained on the table, was an impossibility.

But Ella annoyed him a good deal by addressing several observations to him while he was in the act of filling, or rather *loading* his mouth, as he actually *threw* in the quantity that he *pitched* with his fork, much in the same way as they cast hay into a waggon, and Ella could get nothing more than a nod from him, in reply, while he never turned his eyes from his plate. On the contrary, Sir Francis never lost an opportunity of addressing her, and though what he said was merely

common-place, he pronounced it in so low a tone, and with such a peculiar manner, that it might have been conceived of great importance but for Ella's elevated replies, in which she contrived to recapitulate the substance of his observation, so that its insignificance might be apparent. Her eyes were continually seeking her husband's, he sat nearly opposite, and she was glad to perceive that he did not *appear* to be watching her, though she knew very well that he was? but his glances were so contrived that no one could detect them but those who suspected their motive.

Right glad was Ella to escape from table, when she drew her mother and sister apart, to hold a consultation on the propriety of pleading some excuse for retiring before supper, which Ella concluded would only be a repetition of the dinner scene. Yet she was very anxious Sir Francis should not

imagine they withdrew on his account, and it was agreed that Mrs. Valency should complain of a trifling indisposition, and as it was too far for the carriage to go twice, they should all go home together.

A few card tables were formed among the ladies, before the gentlemen appeared, and Ella very readily made one of a whist party, as it gave her something to do, and a pretext for withdrawing her attention from the company. The game was suspended for a few minutes while tea and coffee were handing round, during which time the gentlemen ascended from the dining room. The Major was the first that entered; Ella's eyes followed him, but he did not approach her, but sat down near one of the other card tables, and seemed to be watching the game very intently. Ella felt hurt, nothing could have been more guarded or proper than her behaviour, and that

he should not come and say something to her, as he was always wont to do, if he had only been absent for a single hour, hurt her very much.

She resumed her cards, though wholly inattentive, till Mrs. Skeller, who was her partner, took the opportunity between the deals of rising, as she requested Sir Francis Heathcote, who Ella now observed standing behind Mrs. Skeller, to take her cards, and be kind enough to finish the rubber, as she wanted to arrange some other parties. The Baronet, with the greatest alacrity, complied with her request. Ella was extremely provoked, and now appeared wholly engrossed with her cards, but was in reality less so than ever. Not that Sir Francis had the power of distracting her imagination, but she observed her husband's looks cast towards the table with an aspect of astonishment and displeasure, though he continued

at a distance; and most glad was Ella, that he was not in such a situation as to command a view of Sir Francis's face: for what most particularly annoyed her, was the almost incessant gaze, which the Baronet (who was remarkable for the audacity with which he *could* stare) fixed on her. Her only resource was to appear not to perceive it; she was extremely serious, and totally silent, except in regard to the game. But Sir Francis was repeatedly guilty of the most glaring errors, while he affected an uncommon excess of absence, which could only be attributed to the undisguised admiration with which he continued to contemplate Mrs. Burlington.—Whenever she committed a fault, he took care it should not pass unobserved; while he pretended to look over it with great indulgence, and laughed it off in a peculiar manner, that almost exasperated Ella. She

was convinced he was only behaving thus, for the purpose of distressing her, and that his heavy sighs, and tender glances, were practised in order to insult her in the most impertinent manner; yet in a way which she could not openly resent. She would have relinquished her cards and quitted the table, careless of what construction might have been put on her behaviour, rather than have submited to this insolence; but her husband's presence compelled her to endure it, lest it should be suspected by him. All who were not playing at cards had retired to the music room, except the Major, therefore there was no one but him whom she could have requested to take her place, and she dared not bring him in such close conjunction with Sir Francis. However, she curtailed the rubber by her careless play, which soon gave it to the adversary

when she immediately quitted the table and hastened to her husband, and telling him her mother intended to retire before supper, she proposed seeking her in the music room. He assented by his actions, for he arose and held out his arm to her, which she eagerly took, but she could not get a word from him. They met Mrs. Valency and Honoria re-entering the the apartment, the latter, as had been concerted, complaining of indisposition, and after much polite solicitude on the part of Mrs. Skeller and the Colonel, the carriage was ordered, and our party were permitted to retire.

Sir Francis had now given Ella a sufficient plea for treating him as he deserved, and she resolved never again to speak to, or even look at him. The Major continued silent during their drive home, and Ella was as little inclined to be talkative; Honoria had exhausted all her little stock of forced

cheerfulness, and reclined in the corner of the carriage, unconscious of the deep sighs that escaped her bosom, while tears trickled down her cheeks, as she contemplated the bright rays of the moon, and thought that the same beam might play on the form most dear to her, though she was denied even the consolation of knowing what spot on earth he inhabited. There is some comfort in knowing where to bend one's thoughts, and being certain of the place where all our interest centers; but it is wretched for the imagination, to be, as it were, wandering over the face of the earth, vainly seeking its object, which seems as completely lost, as if swept from the surface of the globe.

Mrs. Valency's ruminations were not of a much brighter hue than those of her companion. She was thinking whether it would not have been more *fortunate for* her daughters, if

she had not happened to be driving on the sands at Weymouth, at the time Major Burlington was brought on shore. He betrayed symptons of a propensity, of all others, the most likely to interrupt his conjugal happiness; though whether it existed to such an unfortunate degree she had yet to learn; but she had not to learn that her youngest daughter's peace had been sacrificed to the attractions of that brother, whom the Major had been the means of introducing to her, and Mrs. Valency was inclined at that moment to wish that her childeren had never seen either of the Burlingtons. But she was wrong in imputing to the Major a *general* propensity to jealousy, for there was no one upon earth of whom he would have been jealous without a cause, except Sir Francis Heathcote; and the peculiar circumstances of the case, together with his knowledge of the Baronet's character, ren-

dered it by no means unnatural that he should regard him with an eye of suspicion, and feel extremely annoyed that his wife should have been introduced into his company. No sooner was Ella alone with her husband, than she implored him to tell her if any thing in her conduct had displeased him. He immediately replied; "You ought not to have spoken to Sir Francis Heathcote at all."

"How could I avoid it, addressing me as he did? I had no plea for treating him in so contemptuous a manner."

"No plea! every woman, and every man too, has a plea for treating him as the most dispicable wretch; I am astonished how Mrs. Skeller could admit him at her house. Had I had the most distant idea of meeting him there, no inducement should have tempted me to go."

"Nor me either; but we ought to

recollect, that every body does not consider his conduct in the light that we do, and therefore think it not a sufficient reason for banishing him from society, and——"

"No female should speak to him!" interrupted the Major, warmly; "A man, whose name is at this very time announced in the public papers, as the monster who has deprived a husband of his wife, and his offspring of their mother."

"How!" cried Ella, in amazement; "what new atrocity has he been guilty of?"

"It was only yesterday I saw the account of the trial, by which this wretch was sentenced to pay twenty thousand pounds, for having by a course of demoniac arts, succeeded in his villanous designs on the lovely Mrs. A. who, till now, has been deemed a pattern of virtue and propriety. I was reluctant to shock

your ears with the repetition of such enormities."

"O! had I known this, nothing should have tempted me to speak to the fiend. How grateful ought I to be to Heaven, who sent you, my Edgar, as my blessed guardian spirit to save me from such a hateful union, and secure to me so blessed a reverse."

Edgar did not reply, as usual, to her affectionate expressions, and still looked very unhappy.

"Are you offended with me, my husband," she continued; "be assured I have spoken to Sir Francis for the last time. O! why, my dearest Edgar, suffer such a wretch to disturb our harmony?"

"Ella, I cannot endure to be looked on as a suspicious, morose husband, rather to be feared than loved. Why did your eyes so continually seek mine, when Sir Francis was ad-

dressing you? Why did you look as if you were afraid I was *watching* you? and how was it that he became your partner at cards?"

The latter circumstance Ella explained in a few words; to his former interrogation she replied,

"I am sure, on reflection, you will allow there was nothing unusual in my eyes seeking yours; and, if you observed it more to day than in general, it was because you were at a distance from me: you are so seldom far from my side, that my eyes have no need to go in search of you; but, whenever you quit it, they very speedily follow you. You were resolved to keep them wandering this evening, for you never came near me."

"I *could* not, I was so disturbed," said Edgar, the gloom of his looks increasing, and he continued; "O! when I know that a short time only can intervene before I shall be com-

pelled to quit you, and that the wretch may be staying in this neighbourhood, and that you may be liable to his persecution. O! my brother! my dear, dear Spencer! with what aggravated poignancy do I now feel your absence? to your protection, I might with confidence have intrusted my treasure; how cruel is your desertion of me? every day I feel it more and more; no time, no reflexion can reconcile me to your loss; in every new vexation I doubly feel this deprivation!"

"You did right," said Ella, her tears fast flowing, "to mention Spencer at such a moment, and to talk of the time when you also would leave me."—

Her sobs choaked her utterance, and her husband could no longer resist folding her to his breast, and endeavouring to sooth her; but she continued, "yes, to *my* family you owe all your unhappiness! it has deprived

you of your brother, and given you a wife whom you can suspect!"

"No, no, my love! my dearest Ella! *suspect?* no, impossible!"

"I shall want no protection in your absence; my own prudence shall protect me; if I am compelled to remain behind you, but imperative necessity alone shall force me to stay. And if I do go, who shall console my dear mother, and my poor afflicted Honoria? O! Edgar, when you look at her faded complexion, and see her efforts to repel the starting tear, when any thing relating to your brother is alluded to, when you are sensible of all this—how can you reproach *us* for his loss?"

Thus, as is generally the case, when a new source of disturbance arises, all the old grievances are revived, and talked over, and often supersede the more recent which diminish by comparison. The hateful subject of Sir

Francis, was relinquished, while that of poor Spencer was dwelt on till their hearts were completely softened, and each did all in their power to sooth the other, and denote the excess of their affection.

The Major greatly regretted that he had betrayed any displeasure towards his wife, who on reflection, he was sensible had acted with the most scrupulous propriety; but he had been unable to maintain his equanimity, on perceiving Sir Francis seated beside her at table, and from that time his compósure had forsaken him, and he thought of the Baronet's detestable character, and other possible circumstances, till for some time he really was not himself.

CHAPTER VII.

Faint as the lustre of a lonely star,
That sheds through night's abyss his distant fire,
Hope feebly glimmer'd on my heart's despair!

PETER PINDAR.

THE next morning Mrs. Valency thinking it probable Sir Francis might call, gave orders to be denied, and it was fortunate she did, as he actually had the assurance to leave his card, but no one was aware of the extent of his audacity (in regard to herself) but Ella, who kept it a profound secret.

One of the most painful circumstances connected with Mr. Burlington's absence, was the total ignorance in which his friends were kept in re-

gard to his welfare. They would have been comparatively at ease had they been certain that he was safe and well, and that he did not harbour such resentful feelings in regard to them, as to deny them the satisfaction of hearing from him, for to that alone could they attribute his determined silence. Yet it was so unlike his natural character, and looked as if he wished to keep them perpetually unhappy on his account. For, however he might profess in his letter, to believe they would wish to forget him, they could not suppose he really thought so. Nothing could reconcile them to this ignorance of his fate, and the longer it continued, the more irksome did it become; when one morning, about six weeks after his departure, William Irby called at the cottage; and, drawing the Major aside, told him with some embarrassment, that he had the pleasure of informing him, Mr. Bur-

lington was in health and safety. Though delighted to obtain any intelligence of his brother, the Major was much astonished at the source from whence it came. He had never mentioned to a single being out of his family, that he was not on the very best terms with his brother, or that he did not correspond with him; yet by William's manner it was evident he anticipated his friend's surprise, and felt awkward in making the communication. The Major very naturally observed;

"Then I must infer, William, that my brother has placed greater confidence in you than in me!"

William looked distressed, but remained silent; with a mortified aspect the Major continued; "may I ask where my brother now is?"

"I really do not know."

"How? is not his letter dated, and is there no post-mark on it?"

"It has the London post-mark on it, but it may have been inclosed to some one in Town, who has put it in the post office. It is not dated at all."

"And, pray did he desire to be remembered to me?"

"He wrote expressly for that purpose, as far as I can infer, as the letter contained very little more than a request that I would oblige him so far as to tell you, he was in good health, and ever had your happiness dearest at heart."

"Dear, dear fellow!" cried the Major, affected almost to tears; "and must not I see the letter?"

William looked painfully at a loss, and said, after some hesitation, "I believe I am not authorized to shew the letter, at least it was not intended to——"

"Say no more, say no more," interrupted the Major, "I would not request it on any account, but I hope

you will satisfy me so far as to answer this question; Are you in my brother's confidence?"

"No, upon my honour, I am not! his conduct is as enigmatical to me, as it can possibly be to you."

"Good Heavens! how strange! Then what could have induced him to write to you?"—William remained silent.

"And why," continued the Major, "could he not as well have addressed himself to me, if he is anxious for my happiness, and harbours no resentment against me."

"That I am sure you may feel confident of," said William, as he moved towards the door; Edgar still detained him, but he could gain nothing more from him, than a repetition of what he had before said, and anxious to impart the information, *pleasing*, as far as it extended, to those as much interested about Spencer as himself, he

hastened to join them, as William bade him good morning.

The intelligence produced a most happy effect on the whole circle: each individual felt as if a heavy weight had been removed from their breasts, while they trusted that through the same channel by which they had now heard of Spencer, they might continue to receive accounts of his welfare. There was new matter for conjecture in the method which he had adopted to satisfy them on that head, but like every other speculation on the subject it only carried them into an interminable maze, and left them more than ever perplexed in the inextricable labyrinth. Honoria on hearing Spencer suddenly spoken of, with an assurance of his being well, felt a revulsion in her feelings, which too plainly told her she had made little progress in the undertaking she had so vigorously attempted. The image of Spencer Bur-

lington would not be speedily banished from a heart in which it had gained such strong ascendancy; it was not of a common character, nor could be expelled by common means, nor rivalled in the course of time by an object of superior attractions, for where was the object of *superior* attractions to Spencer Burlington? there was such genuine originality in every thing that he said with a peculiarity of manner so exclusively characteristic of himself, that there was no chance of ever meeting with another like him, and she who had once loved him, must continue to love him for ever, unless by a degradation of taste an inferior object could be admitted to succeed him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Farewell ye lawns by fond remembrance blest,
As witnesses of gay unclouded hours;
Where to maternal friendship's bosom prest,
My happy childhood passed amid your bowers.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

SPRING advanced, and Ella's health and spirits alike declined, for her husband could no longer with propriety remain absent from the army which was again in motion, and her situation was such, as to induce her to relinquish all idea of accompanying him. The certainty that she must for some months be separated from him, and endure all the anxiety his perilous situation must inevitably excite, com-

pletely oppressed her feelings, and affected her whole system.

We shall not dwell on the wretched parting scene, which under such circumstances was so peculiarly painful, with reluctance should we enter into a minute description of those sad sensations which so many have experienced, and thereby renew the pangs of separation.

The beautiful Rinaldo, with a careful conductor, preceding his master to the place of embarkation, and when rejoined by him, was petted and caressed as the only object he could carry with him that had a claim on his affections.

The circle at the cottage was now indeed reduced to a melancholy little party. Mrs. Valency and Honoria were obliged to exert themselves to the utmost, to support Ella under the affliction which she endured, even to a greater excess than the occasion

seemed to justify. But her health so rapidly declined, that she scarcely could resist the persuasion that she should see her husband no more, and should never live to be a mother.

But she endeavoured to combat this prepossession as much as possible, aware of the strong influence of imagination in such cases; and by employing her mind, she in some measure, diverted its predominance. During the two succeeding months, every day was but a renewal of her anxiety, and the arrival of each post attended by a conflict of dread and hope, productive of the strongest agitation, and though she had hitherto received none but favourable accounts from her husband, the struggles she endured were too much for her constitution, and the premature loss of her infant was the consequence. But from that period, she recovered more rapidly than could possibly have been expected, for the

idea that she might follow her Edgar as soon as she was sufficiently re-established, proved her best restorative. Miss Melville had been for some time at the cottage sharing the anxieties, as she had done the pleasures of her friends, and had been the most active attendant on the invalid, but one of a less tractable disposition now demanded their commiseration and exercised their patience. The Admiral, who had been laid up with the gout for several months in London, resolved, as soon as he was capable of travelling, to try the effect of change of air, but was scarcely settled at Mrs. Valency's, when he was attacked more violently than ever with his constitutional disorder, and the exertions of every individual under the roof were put in requisition to abet his comfort. He was, in truth, any thing but a patient sufferer, and required more attendance than any other three sick

persons, only moderately captious. In his letters to Mrs. Valency he had made very particular inquiries respecting Mr. Spencer Burlington, but her replies had always been ambiguous; but now that she was confronted with him, she could no longer suppress a simple relation of the facts relative to Mr. Burlington's strange conduct. The Admiral's resentment knew no bounds, and never did he feel a twinge of his complaint without wishing he could have inflicted it on Spencer Burlington, on whose head he would denounce anathemas as he lay raving with pain, and most *devoutly* pray that he might be doomed to endure all that he himself suffered.

Honoria not unfrequently overheard these *pious* ejaculations, and her aspirations were of a tendency fully to counteract them, for she prayed for his happiness who had destroyed her's.

All apprehensions on Ella's ac-

count were now happily dissipated, and by the end of a month she was so perfectly recovered, that she only waited for a letter from her husband, with instructions how she was to proceed, to fix the day of her departure. Her mother and sister were more reconciled to the idea of her going, from the consciousness that she could not be happy away from her husband; and they could derive no satisfaction from her society, while sensible that she was miserable. A longer period than usual had now elapsed without her hearing from Edgar, and all those apprehensions which had abated from having repeatedly proved groundless, were again revived. The servant, who daily repaired to the nearest post town, failed one morning to return at the accustomed hour, and Ella's terrors increased in proportion as her suspense was prolonged. The Admiral too was worse than ever on that

day; he could not stir without the assistance of two men, and Mrs. Valency began to dread a fatal termination of his disorder.

The dinner hour arrived, yet the messenger returned not; and though his detention offered no just grounds for concluding that unfavourable intelligence had been received of the Major, yet Ella could not divest herself of the persuasion, that his protracted stay had something to do with it. The man might have heard in the town, that the newspaper of the day announced some dreadful catastrophe, and was afraid to return with such a horrible relation. In short, she worked herself up to such a pitch of apprehension, that she found it impossible to remain five minutes in the same spot; and continued walking up and down the path which commanded a view of the road, till compelled by fatigue to seek temporary

repose. Evening was closing in when they perceived a small cart approaching; and as it drew nearer, they observed that the carter was leading the weary horse, which their man servant had rode into town.

Convinced that some accident had happened, they hastened forward to ascertain the extent of the evil, and were much shocked to find poor Roberts reclined in the cart, apparently in a speechless state. On his way home the horse had, by some accident, taken fright, and thrown him. He had been picked up by a peasant, who also secured the horse. But Roberts had been incapable, for some hours, of giving any account of himself; but had, at length, requested to be conveyed to the cottage. The medical man who attended the Admiral was fortunately at that time in the house, and afforded prompt assistance to poor Roberts. Ella could

not, at such a moment, importune the sufferer to satisfy her anxiety; but he no sooner met her eyes, than he laid his hand on the letter-case that was slung round him; he was instantly disengaged from it; and Ella having obtained a letter and newspaper, hastened to peruse them in private. She beheld her husband's hand-writing, and broke the seal with confidence, uttering an exclamation of thanks. Honoria was the most active in seeing every thing made comfortable about the favourite domestic; indeed, there was such full occupation for each individual, that her exertions were necessary, and always given with alacrity.

She had no sooner performed that duty, than impatient to gain intelligence of the Major, she joined her sister. She found her in a passion of tears, with the open letter in her trembling hand.

Excessively alarmed, Honoria entreated to know the cause of her distress, observing that the letter was certainly in Major Burlington's handwriting.

" It is, it is," sobbed Ella; " but, oh! look how it is disguised by the pain with which it was written." Honoria read the few scarcely legible lines, which were these:

" Perhaps I may be with my dearest Ella before this scrawl shall have prepared her to expect me; but I send it with the dispatches, that may probably reach England before the Mermaid, in which I have secured my passage. I have received a trifling wound, which furnishes me with an excuse for remaining a short time inactive, and procures me the exquisite delight of spending a few weeks with my beloved! I embark immediately, and have only time to add the assur-

ance of my fervent and ever-increasing love.

E. B."

"And is my dear Ella crying as if she would break her heart, because her Edgar is coming home, and she may expect him every moment," cried Honoria, endeavouring to rally her sister out of the terrors that had taken hold of her imagination, on learning that her husband was wounded; for she was convinced he would not avail himself of any *excuse* to neglect his military duty, and that if his wound was not of so serious a nature as to incapacitate him from serving for a considerable time, he would not think of returning to England. The difficulty with which he had written, in order to appease her fears, was but too apparent; and even the idea that she might see him before another hour had elapsed, was

insufficient to counteract the effects of her apprehensions. Her mother and sister left nothing unsaid that could tend to sooth her into composure; but the longer she reflected on the subject, the more gloomy did it appear: he might die on his passage home, neglected and forlorn; or only reach his native land to mingle with its dust. She most anxiously looked over the newspaper, to ascertain if any account was given of the affair in which her husband had suffered; but there she only found matter for augmented dread. Major Burlington was mentioned as being wounded *dangerously*.

Ella now found herself called on to exert all her fortitude, in order to restrain her feelings within the bounds of reason; and she displayed less violence under this confirmation of her fears, than when she had had less *to suffer*, and therefore did not

much feel the necessity of enduring with patience.

There was anguish, there was agony, in her looks; but it no longer burst forth in vehement demonstrations. The ship news was now eagerly turned to by Honoria (for Ella could read no further), to see if there was any intelligence of the Mermaid, when she joyfully exclaimed, "It is arrived at Plymouth! and no doubt he will be here to-night." But on referring to the date of this communication, they found that the Mermaid had reached Plymouth three days before.

"Three days!" cried Ella, in despair, "and we have neither seen nor heard of him, though within a day's journey."

She now felt convinced, that her husband was either dead or dying at Plymouth, and she instantly determined on setting off for that place,

and ascertaining his fate, which she thought she might immediately, by applying to the captain of the Mermaid. It was vain to attempt turning her from her purpose; she was absolutely resolved, and in that state of mind which rendered it barbarous to oppose her. She would not delay even till horses could be procured from the nearest town. No, the mail coach for Plymouth would pass within a quarter of a mile of the house in the course of half an hour, and in *that* she determined to go, as she should then be at Plymouth early the next morning, and no argument or expostulation could induce her to wait the time it would require to adopt any other mode of travelling.

The whole house was now in a state of the utmost disorder and confusion; it was one of those periods which every body has experienced at times, when every thing seems to have

gone wrong, and one might imagine some malignant spirit was exercising his utmost ingenuity in devising the most effectual means to cross, torment, and distress one. To suffer Ella to depart in such a state of misery, and with such a prospect of increasing wretchedness, without a companion who could share her sorrows, and support her spirits, was out of the question, and Honoria immediately determined to accompany her.

Miss Melville was there to partake of Mrs. Valency's fatigues. She (Mrs. V.) really believed the Admiral was dying, and therefore could not leave him, nor was it possible to spare any domestic to attend the young ladies, for poor Roberts's disaster, not only deprived them of his services, but made it necessary some one should wait on him. Mrs. Valency could not bear the thoughts of her daughters travelliug in a manner they were so

totally unused to, but Ella was firm to her purpose, though incapable of arguing, and Honoria endeavoured to persuade her mother she had nothing to apprehend on their account, as *two* together they should protect each other, and should never leave the vehicle till they alighted at Plymouth.

Their preparations were rapidly executed, and the Admiral was allowed to rave for one of his attendants, while the man carried the baggage to where the mail coach passed, and waited to see the ladies off.

Mrs. Valency witnessed her childrens precipitate departure with the most painful sensations, and could find no consolation but in the consciousness that whatever she, or they, might be doomed to endure, they had nothing wherewith to reproach themselves. What showers of tears fell from Honoria's eyes as she supported the trembling form of her sister, along

the path leading to the high road. It was quite dark, being a very cloudy night, and a soft summer wind swept mournfully through the branches, and, though it chilled her not, it made Honoria shudder. She looked back, and saw the lights in the cottage-window, and thought she perceived her mother's figure cross the chamber. Her tears redoubled, as she fervently pressed her sister's hand. Perhaps it was a *widowed* hand! Honoria could have sunk on the earth, and groaned for anguish; but she checked the excess of her emotion, recollecting her office must be that of the consoler.

Ella spoke not, wept not; and the universal trembling that shook her frame, alone betrayed her feelings. They had been but a few minutes at their station, when the merry horn, which seemed screaming forth intelligence from all quarters of the globe,

announced the approach of the vehicle. Ella no sooner descried it, than her extreme anxiety to know if they could be accommodated gave her utterance, and she cried out to them to stop, and eagerly demanded if there were places for *two* to Plymouth. The driver immediately drew up, and most glad were our poor wanderers to find that the coach was quite empty. They were soon whirled away in it, deriving a species of comfort from the chance which permitted them to be alone.

CHAPTER IX.

Much in the stranger scene appears,
To justify suspicious fears.

They travelled for near three hours without even stopping to change *horses*, when the coachman at length drew up, and the carriage door was opened, but the ladies declined descending, when they were informed that the passengers always supped at that inn, and remained to sleep for some hours, as the coach would not proceed again till day light.

"How! is not this the mail?" asked Honoria; "No madam, it is the heavy coach, it always stops here for some hours."

"O! how unfortunate! cried Ella, in despair; "but can't we have a chaise to carry us on immediately?"

"We don't keep any chaises at this house madam."

"But will not the coachman for a considerable sum be induced to go on with us?"

"His horses are quite knocked up madam, the last stage was a very heavy one, and we have no fresh horses, so they remain here on purpose to rest."

"And is there no place in the neighbourhood from whence we might obtain a conveyance of any kind?"

"No madam, the nearest town is fifteen miles off."

Nothing was to be done but to submit as patiently as they could to this inevitable delay. Yet *patiently* to endure, under such circumstances was impossible; and nothing but the assurance that the next town was so

far off, would have prevented Ella, soliciting a guide, and attempting to walk to it; for how did she know but that a single hour's delay might prevent her receiving on her bosom, her husband's last sigh?

They were conducted to a neat apartment, and informed supper would be ready immediately; but Honoria knew her sister could not eat, and entreated her to swallow a glass of wine, and then endeavour to obtain some moments of repose.

Ella only shook her head, and continued pacing up and down the room with her hands clasped in speechless misery. Honoria represented to her the probability of her being overcome by fatigue, and rendered incapable of those exertions she might be soon called on to make on her husband's account. That consideration induced Ella to say she would try to lie down, and Honoria went to take a

survey of their apartment. But she found that if they both went to bed they must occupy separate chambers, as the first she was shewn into had only a *single* bed in it, and she was informed the other was on the second floor, with a bed of similar dimensions. Honoria expresssed her dissatisfaction at such accommodations, but the chambermaid assured her the house was quite full, and that the company had all retired to rest, which was very probable, as it was past one o'clock. Honoria asked the name of the place, and was told it was not a town, but that the inn stood alone by the road side. She resolved not to leave her sister; she was convinced neither of them would sleep, therefore their resting-place was of little consequence, and they might, by turns, lie down for a short time. As she left the chamber, she observed, that it opened into a wide passage,

where a range of doors appeared on either side, and she walked a little way along it, as she again asked if all those rooms were engaged; for she suspected the best accommodations were kept in reserve, as too good for persons travelling in a public conveyance.

"This way, this way, if you please, ma'am; that is not the way down stairs," cried the woman, who seemed extremely apprehensive lest Honoria should pursue the direction she had taken; and added with vehemence: "Upon my word of *honour*, ma'am, all those apartments are occupied." Her evident anxiety to induce Honoria to turn, determined her to proceed, as she observed, "I should like to see something more of this house; it is much more extensive than I imagined."

"O! indeed, ma'am, there is nothing worth seeing; supper is ready

I am sure by this time—pray come this way."

They had now reached the termination of the passage, and Honoria thought she perceived the woman attempt to blow the candle out. She immediately took it from her with a determined air, and pushed open a large folding-door that stood ajar, while the servant, trembling from head to foot, entreated her not to go in there, as there were people sleeping in that apartment.

"Ridiculous," cried Honoria, "this is too large a door to conduct to a chamber." She had already passed through, an immense space presented itself, and, on holding up the light, she found she was in an extensive picture gallery. She turned her eyes, in unfeigned astonishment, on her attendant, who was evidently in great trepidation.

"Surely this cannot be an *inn!*"

cried Honoria. "Yes, yes; upon my word and *honour* it is, ma'am, but it was formerly a gentleman's seat, and all these fine things remain."

Honoria traversed the gallery, narrowly observing every thing that met her eyes. There were many portraits, and whole length figures in the collection; and, as the light fell on them, her whole attention became absorbed, the colour fled her cheeks, and she trembled so as to be compelled to resign the light to the woman's charge; her eyes no longer wandered, but she slowly proceeded with an aspect of deep rumination. Having reached the top of a grand staircase, she stopped a few moments as if considering how she ought to act, then began descending, as she said she supposed there was a way round to the room she had quitted below. Her companion made no an-

swer, but followed her down the stairs, apparently too much dismayed to know what to say, or how to conduct herself. They descended to a magnificent hall, but it excited no further astonishment in Honoria—apprehension and perplexity, of the most distressing nature, now engrossed all her ideas. To leave that house immediately she knew was the only step to be taken, however inconvenient and perilous it might be to quit its shelter in the middle of the night, and go wandering they knew not whither; for, unaccountable as it may appear, she was perfectly convinced they were in the abode of *Sir Francis Heathcote!* and consequently the very *last* place on earth where her sister and self ought to be inmates!

It was *his* picture that had occupied the most distinguished place in the gallery! she knew he had an

estate in that county, and every other circumstance in corroboration of the fact, became, upon reflection, equally clear to her. She determined not to terrify her sister by such a communication, but only so far to alarm her apprehension, as to stimulate her to act as was expedient. She now bade the woman shew the way to the apartment where they had left the lady; and, after traversing a long passage, which led from the front to the back of the house, they reached the door of what Honoria concluded was the housekeeper's room, and that they had, on alighting from the carriage, been shewn in the *back* way, and conducted to that apartment, in order to prevent their suspicions being excited by the magnificence which the front of the mansion displayed. Honoria shut the door on the abashed attendant, and approached her sister, who was sitting by a table, on which her

elbows rested, while her hands concealed her face. Honoria thought the necessity for action would prove salutary to her under her present circumstances, and therefore, with less reluctance, aroused her, saying, "My dear Ella, I have made a most strange discovery in my survey of this house, I am convinced it is not an inn." She was obliged to repeat this twice before Ella could comprehend her, when she added:

"I will tell you what I suspect, or rather am persuaded of. You know the equipages which many gentlemen drive in the present day * so exactly resemble a mail coach, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish them from each other, even by daylight, and nothing is more probable than that we should be deceived in the dark; and fully expecting the

* 1812.

mail, take it for granted, *that* what we saw must be it. Now we have certainly been the dupes of some *gentleman* driver, who has been amusing himself at our expense, and who has carried the joke rather further than is usual on these occasions, as he has actually brought us to his house. This accounts for our stopping when we so little expected it; but our only alternative is to get away as fast as we can, as we have no reason to suppose this man to be of such a description of character as would render it prudent we should continue in his house."

"O! if we *could* but proceed!" said Ella, "I care not for any thing else! I think you are mistaken in your suspicions, for the servants would have betrayed the truth; but if we *could* but go on!"

"The servants," observed Honoria, "were doubtless tutored; we have

only seen two, and I dare say they are in the habit of being made subservient on similar occasions. You may remember we remained some time in the carriage at the door, which gave the owner time to further his plan of operation, and instruct his creatures—but we *must* get away."

"And how is it possible? Can we wander from hence alone, in the dark, without knowing where to go, or even where we are?"

"No," said Honoria, "that must be our *last* alternative; but we must try the effect of acting resolutely; let us ring the bell, and tell these people we are aware of the deception that has been practised on us, and insist on their immediately furnishing us with the means of leaving the house."

"O, any measure that can enable us to go on," said Ella, who could only think of the object of her

journey. The bell was rung, and Honoria undertook to be spokeswoman; and she assumed a determined air, prepared to insist on what she required. But the summons was repeated again and again, in vain. There seemed suddenly a great deal of confusion in the house, people running backwards and forwards past the door, yet no one entering to answer the bell. Honoria at length looked out, and called to a footman who was passing; he stared at her, and looked surprised. It was not him who had first attended them, and who at that moment came running down the passage, and pushing the other on with some violence past the door, he entered himself, and closing it precipitately, begged, in breathless confusion, to know what the ladies wanted?

"If we wanted evidence of what we are already convinced of," said

Honoria, "your appearance would confirm it. Procure a conveyance instantly to conduct us from this house, or let your master beware of the consequences of his unwarrantable proceedings."

The man looked aghast, but replied with rapidity, "I–I–I– don't know what you mean, ma'am; I am sure my master has been in bed hours ago, and don't know any thing of your being here; but, if you don't like to sleep at this inn, ma'am, it happens very luckily that a chaise is just come in with some company, and I will prevail on the driver to carry you on directly, if you please, ma'am."

Honoria was aware that the man wanted to carry on the farce, and affected not to understand her, but she was also perfectly convinced that something extraordinary had occurred which rendered their host anxious to

get rid of them, or their demands would not have been so readily complied with.

She told the man, they were ready that moment to depart, to which he returned, that they might go the moment the chaise-horses were refreshed.

"*That* will not do; we must go instantly," said Honoria, who suspected this was only some finesse, as she doubted not it would be one of Sir Francis's carriages that would conduct them on the road. The man then assured her it should be ready in ten minutes; but nearly half an hour had elapsed, and both sisters becoming as much alarmed, as they were impatient, when it was announced. The same man conducted them to the back door, where the carriage waited, and Honoria could perceive, by the light which he held, that the vehicle was in reality a hack.

chaise—as she stepped into it, Ella emphatically exclaimed,

"Thank heaven, it is still dark; I dreaded that day-light would have surprised us here!"

"O! if it had!" thought Honoria, but she could now again breathe freely, as she recovered from that dread and anxiety amounting to torture, which she had endured within the walls they had now escaped from. That her sister should be under the roof of the libertine wretch who had once been so violently enamoured of her, and who had lately been arraigned for outraging the most sacred ties; that her afflicted, circumspect, most prudent sister should have been under the roof of this monster, and apparently in his power, had excited a degree of horror in Honoria's breast, that did not subside till long after she was sure they had escaped him. She was resolved the circumstance should

never transpire from her lips, and her sister was the last person to whom she would have imparted it. For to have been in Sir Francis Heathcote's house, she was sure Ella would regard as a most serious affliction, and be in everlasting dread lest it should transpire. But Honoria, ever ready to hope, trusted that it would not, as she believed that Sir Francis would keep it secret for his own sake, as he must be aware of the consequences that would ensue should it reach Major Burlington's ears; and she had lately heard it whispered that Sir Francis was not *fond* of fighting, as he had declined a challenge from the man he had most injured. Honoria hoped too, that the servants they had seen were ignorant of their identity; in short, as they had so well escaped the dreaded evil, she determined not to anticipate its bad effects. Ella's state of mind ren-

dered her little inquisitive; she could think but on one subject, and Honoria had little difficulty in suppressing from her whatever she did not wish her to know.

CHAPTER. X.

What evil hap has brought thee here?

SCOTT.

WHILE our travellers are silently pursuing their journey, we shall remain for a short time with Sir Francis Heathcote, though eager to take leave of so worthless a companion.

He had been spending a few days at Colonel Skeller's, and had not been without a hope of seeing Mrs. Burlington while there, and had sought the opportunity by directing his walks towards the cottage; for that she should only be in his company he knew would be a source of annoyance to her, most especially in

her husband's absence, and prove still more tormenting to him, should he happen to hear of it. However, chance did not befriend him on those occasions; and he was obliged to curtail his visit to Colonel Skeller, and return to his own house, where he expected a guest it had cost him much trouble to allure there. This was an old aunt, from whom he had great expectations, and whose favour he had all but forfeited by his late public breach of morality; but she had at last consented to listen to his vindication, and by completely misrepresenting the circumstances of the case, and artfully deploring his own fallibility, he made it appear almost excuseable. This, together with a patient attention to long and repeated lectures from the old lady, restored him to her good graces; and she had promised to spend a few days with him in her way to Sidmouth. Co-

lonel Skeller happened to have a very jovial party on the day Sir Francis was to return home, and not choosing to lose it, he determined not to set off till late in the evening; and, as his residence was only thirty miles from thence, he could easily reach it by his usual time of retiring to rest. Accordingly, between nine and ten, his carriage was ordered, and being in every respect after the fashion of the day, it presented the perfect resemblance of the royal mail. Sir Francis mounted the box, and his valet amused himself sounding the horn. The distant lights in the cottage windows had just caught the Baronet's eyes, when his attention was attracted by the eager demand for accommodation to Plymouth. Two females, attended by a man servant so immediately in the vicinity of the cottage, was in itself a suspicious circumstance; but the voice could not be

mistaken—it was Mrs. Burlington's. Sir Francis could not resist this rare opportunity; and, though dubious of his own plan, he instantly gave his valet the signal, who immediately answered the inquiry, and descending, quickly put the ladies into the carriage. As they proceeded, Sir Francis had plenty of time to plan and revolve his design: he did not expect his aunt before noon the next day; and therefore, if he could but so manage it as to compel his fair passengers (he concluded Mrs. Burlington's companion to be her female attendant) to sleep at his house, they would not interfere with the old lady, as they might set off again long before she arrived. One night spent under his roof would be as injurious to the fame of Mrs. Burlington as his utmost malice could desire; and, (independent of any greater length to which his depth of villany might carry him)

could *that* be accomplished, his revenge would be amply gratified. But the only possible method of succeeding, was by completely deceiving her. This was not so difficult a task as it might appear; all his servants would have retired by the time he reached home; his valet could arouse one of the females, who, from experience, he knew he could trust; and those two, together, would be sufficient for the furtherance of his scheme, which he imparted to his companion on the road.

This fellow was to sustain the part of waiter, and undertook to manage the business expertly. The ladies were kept in the carriage while the necessary steps were taken preparatory to their being conducted into the house, when Sir Francis retired to a distant part of the mansion, rejoicing in the success of his plans, and meditating their perfect accomplishment.

But, provided they should all succeed, he was still a little anxious in regard to how he should send forward his victim on the ensuing morning. In one of his own carriages he could *not*, as he did not wish to trust more domestics than those already in the secret; as, through them, the affair might reach his aunt's ears; he therefore adopted another plan, and sent the valet off to a small inn, about half a mile distant, where a chaise was kept, which he ordered to be at the park by day-break. Sir Francis was just flattering himself he had obviated every possible mischance, when the female servant burst into the room, and in great trepidation told him she believed one of the ladies had found out they were not at an inn; what else she would have said was interrupted by the sound of a carriage rattling over the gravel, and as it stopped, a loud ringing was

heard at the hall door. The idea of his aunt instantly presented itself to Sir Francis; he would rather have seen the most hideous spectre that was ever described. His minion at that moment returned from his mission to the village inn, and was just in time to usher the old lady into the saloon, lighted only by the candle which he held. There her *affectionate* nephew flew to welcome her, declaring it was the happiest moment of his life, and entreating to know to what *blessed* chance he owed the felicity of seeing her so much sooner than he had expected, and at such an unfortunate hour for *herself*, as she would find nothing comfortable to receive her. Her sudden appearance was soon accounted for, by her aversion to sleeping at inns, which had induced her to press on and prefer knocking up the whole household,

to running the risque of being put into a damp bed.

Her *overjoyed* nephew protested she was quite right, and said he would hasten to order arrangements for her perfect convenience, as he flew out of the room to consult his colleague on what was best to be done in the present emergency. He encountered him on the stairs.

"Hang that old woman, Stephens," exclaimed the affectionate nephew; "what on earth are we to do with the young ones?"

"Why, get rid of them as fast as we can, I should think, if you please, sir," returned Stephens; "their bell has been ringing these ten minutes, and I have not had time to attend it."

"Run, run then, and see what they want, for fear any of the old beldam's people should answer it. And—I say—I suppose—plague take the

old wretch—but I suppose we must let them go, for fear she should discover them; and take care they don't find out *who* they are obliged to for this frolic; for as I cannot reap the benefit of it, it is as well to avoid any annoyance it might occasion one. They must go in the hack chaise; so get it here as fast as you can, and if possible make them still believe they are in an inn."

Heartily wishing his aunt quietly deposited in her last home, and himself in possession of her wealth, and at liberty to pursue his vicious career, without a single check, Sir Francis returned to reiterate a smiling welcome to his most unwelcome guest. Stephens flew to quiet the almost incessant peal of the bell below, and was not a little dismayed on perceiving one of the newly-arrived domestics actually confronted with the ladies. He impelled him

forward by no very gentle means; and, in reply to Honoria's demand for a conveyance, instantly availed himself of the ready falsehood he had planned in his way to the apartment.

But it was necessary he should again repair to the inn where the chaise was to be procured, which occasioned the delay of half an hour. As the ladies were driven off, the trusty valet hastened to inform his master of the success of his activity; but Sir Francis could not feel consoled by the consciousness that he was now secured from detection, for the violent disappointment of his well-laid project.

CHAPTER XI.

But once I saw that face, and then,
It was so mark'd by inward pain,
I could not pass it by again;
It breathes the same dark spirit now,
As death were stamp'd upon its brow.

LORD BYRON'S GIAOUR.

Our sisters performed the remainder of their journey in post chaises. What an additional burthen was it on Honoria's mind, to reflect that they had commenced, and continued it for five-and-twenty miles in Sir Francis Heathcote's carriage; for of *that* she was now perfectly assured, having, unknown to her sister, questioned the post-boy who had brought them from

the Baronet's residence, and his answers had confirmed all her suspicions. Having never in her life been in a mail-coach, her surprise was not excited by many minutias that might have appeared extraordinary to another; and though, on entering the house, it had struck her as having little resemblance to the generality of inns, a suspicion of the truth had not suggested itself, till she observed the chambermaid's extreme trepidation, and found herself in the picture gallery; when, recollecting how unexpectedly they had been delayed, the suggestion instantly followed that they had been imposed on, for the entertainment of some gentleman; but *who* that might be never occurred to her, till she beheld the portrait. Then all was painful conviction. She knew Sir Francis drove a carriage of the description in question, and she could no longer admit a doubt. As dark-

ness did not prevail for many hours at that time of the year, they soon proceeded under favour of day light; but harrassed and weary, more from distress of mind than fatigue of body, they were little disposed to do justice to the beauties of the rising sun, or acknowledge the reviving influence of early day. Ella was hardly aware whether it was the sun or moon that was shining, her whole mind was occupied with what she was to do when she reached the termination of her journey; and how, if she failed in one way, she was to proceed in another. Honoria certainly felt a little refreshed by the morning breeze. She wondered whether Spencer Burlington was in a hemisphere, where the sun at that hour possessed equal influence, and whether he too was contemplating it; but as she recollected that it was much more probable he was comfortably asleep, and not even

dreaming of her; who, though weary and afflicted from nearer causes, could not restrain her thoughts from wandering to him, her spirits sunk under the impression, and she wept from her heart.

They stopped and breakfasted about eight o'clock, being detained a short time on account of horses, or they could not have been tempted to delay, though Honoria felt the necessity of food; but Ella could swallow but a small portion, for the idea of a dying husband, and excessive eagerness to proceed, were powers of allaying, which few appetites could have resisted.

They at length reached their destination, and being no strangers to the place, ordered the postillions to drive to the Admiral's office, where they were sure of gaining intelligence respecting the ship Major Burlington had mentioned as that he was to come

home in. Honoria observed her sister turn deadly pale as the carriage stopped, and cast a glance on her that implied she was incapable of making any inquiry. Honoria immediately determined to get out; it was yet early in the day, and there was not that crowd of naval officers about the spot, which might be expected at a later hour. With that air of perfect gentility which secures respect, and that modest, yet dignified, address which commands attention; Honoria entered the office, and requested to know of a gentleman in attendance, if the Mermaid had really arrived at that port? Being answered in the affirmative, and politely solicited to take a seat, which she declined, she added;

"Perhaps you can oblige me by informing me if any passengers came in her; my sister's husband, Major Burlington, was expected, and ——"

she hesitated, and the gentleman returned;

"I have seen the list, ma'am, and can venture to assure you Major Burlington's name is not on it, but I believe——." He was here interrupted by an officer of the navy, whom Honoria had not before observed, and who addressed her by her name, expressing his pleasure at seeing her. She was much annoyed at this unseasonable recognition, just at the moment she had expected to receive some interesting intelligence, and that her sister was waiting in an agony of suspence. But she was in a measure repaid on looking up, and beholding an old acquaintance, from whose presence she could derive a sort of protection. It was an old post captain, who had been known to her family for many years, and had formerly been flag captain to her uncle. After

the compliments of meeting, he continued,

" I have great pleasure in being able to communicate satisfactory tidings respecting Major Burlington."

" O, can you indeed!" exclaimed Honoria, in joyous accents, as her countenance dilated with pleasure; and she held out her hand, which she had not before done; " O, where, how, when did you leave him?"

" I landed him here, in my own boat, yesterday evening!"

" Heaven be praised," ejaculated Honoria, now sinking on the seat almost overcome by this sudden intelligence. " But how is his wound, and where is he now?"

" He recovered wonderfully during our voyage, for you must know he came home with *me;* for, owing to some mistake, he was disappointed of his passage in the Mermaid. We had a tedious *time* of it, but it happened

fortunately for him, as he got so muc better; that when I left him, yeste day evening about five o'clock, h seemed determined, though I tried t dissuade him from it, to set off in mediately for your house."

"But perhaps he did not go! cried Honoria, starting up and hasten ing to join her sister, with a counte nance that completely prepared he for the good news she had to hear.

The probability of their havin passed her husband on the road, an the lingering apprehension that th journey might be too much for him saved Ella from being overcome b the tide of joy; but she could onl grasp her sister's hand, and utter im perfect sentences of gratitude. A soon as she was a little recovered Honoria requested Captain Harrow ville to direct the postillion to th hotel where he had left the Major

which he did immediately, adding to the ladies;

"I would offer to accompany you, but if he should still remain there, I know you will not require my presence to complete your joy; so I will call by and by to know if I can be of any use."

Honoria expressed her lively thanks, and very glad to avoid his attendance under such peculiar circumstances, bade the postillions drive on swiftly. It was agreed, that should their most sanguine hopes be verified, Honoria should precede her sister into the Major's presence, and prepare him for the sight of her, whose sudden appearance might too violently affect him. Every moment augmented Ella's perturbation, Honoria breathed with difficulty; and as the carriage stopped before the hotel, she eagerly addressed the waiter who came forward:

"Is there a gentleman here of the name of Burlington? Major Burlington, who landed yesterday from Portugal?"

"Major Burlington," the man repeated, "I am sure, ma'am, I don't know, but I'll inquire directly."

What moments were those which elapsed ere this intelligence could be gained! The man reappeared. "Major Burlington left our house yesterday evening in a post chaise, ma'am." Ella threw herself back in the carriage. Honoria's face considerably lengthened, the animation of her eyes suddenly subsided; when another waiter came running out of the hotel crying to the first, "John, John, it is a mistake, Major Burlington is here *now:* he is in number 22."

Honoria could not speak, she tried to open the door herself, the waiter saved her the trouble; she jumped out, and he ran after her into the

hotel, for *run* he was obliged, in order to overtake her.

" Twenty-two, twenty-two," she now continued to articulate; and, having reached the top of the stairs, she recollected that it would be better to apprize the Major of her approach; and she said to the waiter, " Run, run, and tell Major Burlington a lady is coming to see him, a lady, a relation." But she followed the man so closely, that as he opened the door she saw Edgar sitting at a table; his head rested on his hand, so that she could not perceive his face. The waiter announced, " A lady;" but Burlington did not look round, and Honoria thought he had not heard; but her impatience could no longer be restrained, and she entered precipitately, closing the door with a noise that occasioned him to start and look round, when he sprung from his seat, overturning the table by the

violence with which he pushed it from him, as he receded several paces, and sustained himself against the window frame, gasping for breath. Honoria advanced not. *Once*, and only *once* before had she beheld a revolution of countenance like that which her sudden appearance had now occasioned, and that was in the features of Spencer Burlington, when she had so unexpectedly been presented to his view, in the library at Edenvale! A period, an impression, never to be forgotten! and never had this Major looked so like his brother as he did at this moment. Honoria could almost have believed it him, but that the aspect did not so soon assume a softer cast. The same ghastly hue, the same contraction of the lines, the same horror in the eyes, continued for the space of several moments, while he seemed sinking into the earth with debility and

pain, and gazed on her as on the spirit of some murdered friend. Honoria recovering a little from her first dreadful astonishment, advanced a few paces as she exclaimed, " Edgar! Gracious Heaven, my brother! what——"

" Brother!" he echoed in a tone of the most poignant anguish, and sinking on the window seat he groaned aloud; and then continued shaking his head as if his intellects were reeling with despair, as he waved his hand repeatedly that she should retire. Honoria at that moment really believed that both the brothers were afflicted with mental derangement, for in no other way could she possibly account for conduct so wholly without excuse. That the Major was particularly exasperated against her for having been the means of alienating from him the being to whom he was so fondly attached, she inferred from

his present demeanour, and the tone in which he had repeated the word *brother!* She felt intimidated, and fearful of approaching him; but the apprehension of her sister's presenting herself before this violent paroxysm had subsided, or that she was prepared to witness it, stimulated her to overcome her own feelings, and endeavour to soothe his extreme perturbation. She was not without a dread that he had received some fatal intelligence concerning his brother, and nothing but the idea of Ella's situation enabled her to support such a combination of distracting circumstances. Summoning all her resolution, she again advanced with the most conciliating aspect, and said in the tenderest tone, "My dear, dear Edgar, I come to bring you the most delightful intelligence, your Ella, your own Ella! only waits for——"

"Name her not!" he vociferated in

a voice of thunder, as he seemed endued with supernatural strength; and started up rapidly, pacing the room, and holding his head with both his hands.

Honoria said not another word, but stood watching him in trembling terror.

At that luckless moment, Ella, who could admit no doubt of being received with ecstacy by a doating husband, entered the room, and with extended arms, and eyes beaming rapture, was about to precipitate herself into his embrace, believing that the disorder she beheld him in only arose from the expectation of seeing her. But no sooner were his eyes cast on her, than they seemed animated by a degree of phrensy; and recoiling to the farthest end of the apartment, he motioned with his arms as if he would have cast her from him. Ella sunk upon her sister's

shoulder in all that agony and dismay such a reception was calculated to excite. Still she held out her arms towards him, though she could not speak. But utterance was restored to him, and while the trembling of his frame seemed communicated to his speech, he exclaimed;

"Well, well, do you know the nature of your victim, or never would you have ventured into the presence of the outraged, insulted wretch, that you have made me. Leave, leave me, while I can yet command myself, and let me at least have the consolation of thinking that I have treated you better than you deserved."

Ella now sprung forward, and throwing herself at her husband's feet, clasped his knees with all the energy of grief and innocence, as she cast her eyes on his face with the most melting look of supplication, but vainly she gasped for words.

noria expressed all her sister would have said;

"Edgar, Edgar!" she cried, "you are deceived! she is the most virtuous, the most innocent, the most devoted of wives! look at her, and doubt her faith if it be possible."

Honoria's streaming tears fell on her sister's supplicating form. Edgar averted his face, and struggled to disengage himself. Ella started up, and would have thrown her arms around him; but he cast her from him, and she fainted on the bosom of her sister.

He had already reached the door.

"Barbarian!" cried Honoria, "you have killed her." Again he approached, and cast a momentary glance on her. She moved!

"Honoria!" Edgar with difficulty articulated, "love her still! let her not lose a sister and a husband too!"

Tears burst from his eyes, and, regardless of her endeavours to detain him, he rushed out of the apartment!

CHAPTER XII.

There is a grief that cannot feel;
It leaves a wound that will not heal;
My heart grew cold,—it felt not then,
When shall it cease to feel again?

MONTGOMERY.

THOUGH a convulsive movement had agitated the form of Ella, she still remained insensible. Honoria gently laid her along the floor, and hastened to reach some water from the sideboard, hoping to recover her without being compelled to summon other assistance, as curiosity might be excited by her situation and relative circumstances. With streaming eyes she hung over her sister, while she pursued

all the usual methods for restoring suspended animation; but in vain; though the body was slightly agitated, no signs of returning consciousness appeared. Honoria became excessively alarmed, and no longer demurred to ring the bell, and send immediately for medical aid. It was not long before a surgeon arrived, but an hour elapsed before Ella recovered a perfect recollection of where she was, or could persuade herself that what had happened was any thing more than a horrible dream. The surgeon and attendants having retired, it became Honoria's painful task to convince her sister that what had happened was no illusion, in order, that being perfect mistress of the facts, she might determine how to act. But no sooner was Ella thoroughly aware of them, than all appearance of langour seemed to forsake her, and starting up she declared, in the most peremptory voice,

and with an air of desperation, that she would follow her husband to the utmost extremity of the earth, compel him to do her justice, and restore her to his affections, or she would die at his feet. Honoria arrested her progress towards the door, and after much supplication, and representing to her the impropriety of exposing her disorder to the observation of indifferent spectators, she prevailed on her to remain where she was, while she (Honoria) went to make every possible inquiry relative to Edgar. Repairing to the sitting room, she summoned the waiter and inquired if Major Burlington had yet left the house? It was the same man who had rectified the mistake in regard to the Major being there when they first arrived. To Honoria's question, he now replied, "yes ma'am, the gentleman is gone, he is off for Portugal in the fleet now under weigh." Honoria was struck

dumb; the man probably perceived by the anxiety in her countenance that she would have inquired further had she been capable, and he added; "The gentleman only landed yesterday, ma'am, and set off in a chaise almost directly, but he came back here in the nine o'clock coach this morning, and his luggage was embarked again while he came up here, ma'am, and called for pen and ink and paper, and I saw no more of him till about an hour ago, he passed me in the door way and walked very fast down the street."

It was plain this waiter concluded that the ladies had a peculiar interest in what concerned Major Burlington, but that was of no moment to Honoria, under their present circumstances; and, having obtained all the intelligence he could impart, she returned to communicate it to her sister, who

immediately resolved to follow her husband to Portugal.

"And is the fleet actually under weigh?" she exclaimed, "O! we shall be left behind! how, how shall we go? how can we obtain a passage? Let us go again directly to the Admiral's office, and——"

"Wait," said Honoria, "wait one moment, and let me think: We must devise some expedient for accounting for such strange proceedings, and for being left in such a predicament."

"O! I care not what people think, if I can but clear myself in the eyes of my husband."

"But we must endeavour to prevent his incurring censure." Honoria recollected Captain Harrowville, and the probability of his being able to assist them, but how to account to him for the strangeness of their situation was what puzzled her. But promptitude of action was now indispensi-

ble, and she had but a vague idea of what it was possible to do, when the chamber maid knocked at the door, and said a gentleman had called to wait on them, and had sent up his card. It was the very person Honoria wished to see, and consoling her sister by assuring her she had no doubt Captain Harrowville could put them in a way of obtaining a passage, she hastened to join him. From the expression of her countenance, he immediately inferred that they had been disappointed in meeting the Major; and he said, as she entered,

"I am afraid my friend has been too nimble; now had he taken my advice and staid quietly for one night, all would have been as it should be."

"He has, indeed, acted in a very strange manner," said Honoria, "for we find that he has actually embarked again; so we can only conclude, that finding himself so much better, he

could not feel justified in remaining absent from his duty; and that, in a fit of heroism, he has resolved to return to it. He has, probably, written an explanatory letter to my sister, supposing her to be at home."

"It is very odd," said Captain Harrowville; "very odd, indeed;" but soon added, "on second thoughts, I am not so much astonished, for he was lamenting all the way home his inability to retain his situation with the army; and declared no inducement should tempt him to remain absent when he thought he could do his duty without sinking under its effects. I dare say he fell in with some of those fellows who are embarking in high spirits at thoughts of having their heads shot off; and was so infected with their enthusiasm, that he determined to try once more whether he could not kill himself."

Honoria rejoiced that her subter-

fuge had taken so well, and delayed not to inform Captain H. of her sister's resolution, of following her husband; and that she was ready to embark that moment, if she could but procure a passage.

"Oh! if that is all," cried Captain Harrowville, "she may rest satisfied, for I'll procure her a passage immediately, unless I am very unlucky indeed. My particular friend, Captain G. commands the A. which is appointed to convoy the ships for Portugal; I left him this moment, taking leave of the Admiral; I will answer for it, if I can catch him, he will take you with the greatest pleasure."

He was running out of the room, but returned exclaiming, "but if we could only find out what ship the Major is in, it would be the most delightful thing in the world if you could get on board with him." Honoria pronounced a hesitating yes,

and quickly added, " but pray don't lose time;" and Captain Harrowville disappeared, and Honoria went to inform her sister of what had passed; and, eager to draw her thoughts from dwelling on her bitter affliction, she reminded her, that there were many things they should require to augment their wardrobe, if they could have time to purchase them. Ella pointed to the size of her trunk, which was a large one, and said, " I was resolved when I left home, that if I did not find him here, I would seek him in Portugal."

Honoria found that she had tossed in a quantity of clothes, notwithstanding the rapidity of their departure, and that there would be sufficient for them both. To desert her sister was a suggestion that had never once entered Honoria's head. What her mother would feel when she found that they had both left England, she

grieved to reflect on; but was convinced she never would have counselled her acting otherwise under such circumstances, and she determined to spare her feelings as far as possible, by suppressing the particulars most calculated to afflict her, and she seized the period of Captain Harrowville's absence to write the following lines:

"My dearest mother will well conceive with what reluctance I communicate what must add to the anxiety she endures from such various causes. Ella is resolved to seek her husband in Portugal. He came not in the Mermaid; and though we have obtained some favourable accounts of his health, her state of mind is such, that I am sure you would be angry with me, could I think of leaving her. We have fortunately met with Captain Harrowville, who has undertaken to arrange every thing relative to our

voyage; and as we expect to embark immediately, I have only time to add, I will write more circumstantially by the first opportunity, and trust that our speedy return with the object of our solicitude will restore us all to each other. God bless you.

HONORIA VALENCY."

Having thus ingeniously evaded mentioning what would have made her mother perfectly miserable, Honoria felt that internal satisfaction which, under all circumstances, is the best support, and which stimulated the further exertions which she went through with all the alacrity of a vigorous mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

For yon fair band shall merry England claim,
And with their deeds of valour deck her crown;
Her's their bold port, and her's their martial frown,
And her's their scorn of death in Freedom's cause;
Their eyes of azure and their locks of brown,
And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
And free-born thoughts which league the soldier with *the laws*.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

CAPTAIN Harrowville did not keep them long in suspense, but returned to inform them, in the first place, that he had obtained intelligence of Major

Burlington; but such as prevented the possibility of their sailing with him, as he had embarked in a fast-sailing cutter, which was under weigh at the time he had gone on board, and was then nearly out of sight; but, secondly, he had the pleasure to add, that he had found his friend Captain G. and had made him quite happy, by procuring him two such charming companions; that he would have waited on them, but thought it would be much wiser, and quite as gallant, if he preceded them on board, to arrange every thing for their comfortable reception. In the mean time, he had deputed Captain Harrowville to take care of the ladies, and bring them off to the ship.

When Honoria found herself seated in the boat beside her sister, she felt as if she had leisure to breathe, for the first time, since she had descended from the carriage. She looked

around, and scarcely could credit her senses, when she reflected that she actually was embarking for Portugal. She saw boats all about them full of soldiers repairing to the same destination; some were uttering shouts of triumph, while they were answered by cheers from the shore; and Honoria could have moralized, had her mind been more at leisure, on the cheerfulness and glee with which these poor fellows were departing for fields of blood and carnage, which many of them would, ere long, augment; she turned her eyes from them with a sigh, as she seemed to question within herself, if indeed it were possible that her sister and self were among the throng that were embarking for the region of destruction!

The only solution she could give to Edgar's behaviour, was, by concluding that he must have gained intelligence of their having been at

Francis Heathcote's, however improbable it was that the circumstance should so speedily have reached his ears. She debated with herself, whether she should inform Ella, that they had indeed been at the house of Sir Francis; but, on consideration, thought it would be better her sister should have it in her power to deny all knowledge of the person at whose abode they had been detained. Ella exerted herself to make a suitable reply to Captain G.'s polite and hospitable reception of them on board his ship, and having taken a grateful farewell of Captain Harrowville, she retired with Honoria to the cabin appointed for their private accommodation, and to which they chiefly confined themselves, on the plea of seasickness. Honoria would have felt as angry as she was hurt at the conduct of her brother-in-law, had she recollected how ill he had look-

ed, and how he had been affected, when, in a passion of tears, he had flown from them. It required not the remembrance of his ghastly appearance to suppress all resentment in Ella's breast; perfectly acquainted with the yielding softness of her husband's disposition, she was convinced that nothing but the most determined prepossession, that he had been injured to the last degree, would have enabled him to overcome that excess of love and tenderness, which he had once felt for her, and which never had been able to withstand her tears. She knew that a shade of jealousy tinctured his character, but only in regard to one person; and, however unaccountable, she could not doubt that her present calamity sprung from that source. Possibly from some machinations of the wretch who had so often interrupted her happiness; yet how recent must have been their

effects! for Edgar's last letter had been as affectionate as ever. But whatever they might be, Ella was resolved they should not succeed, and never to rest till she had convinced her husband how much he had injured her, and compelled him to acknowledge he merited not the pardon she should be so ready to accord. But his health! that was a source of aggravated misery; how might his mental anguish again impair it?

The heat of the weather sometimes compelled them to go on deck; but they did so with reluctance, as Captain G. always joined them, and they would most gladly have dispensed with his civilities. He was a well-bred, but excessively plain man; but the latter circumstance he never appeared to remember; on the contrary, his manner denoted a design on the heart of every young lady that he spoke to, and no hopelessness of suc-

cess. From him they learned, that the cutter in which Major Burlington had sailed, would probably reach port two or three days before them, as she would not wait for the fleet.

" More perplexity!" thought Honoria. Ella sighed in the bitterness of her heart, as she reflected, that in all probability her husband would have left Lisbon to join the army, before they should have landed; but, in that case, his health must be in a state to permit him to travel, and she should have the satisfaction of knowing he was better, and should follow him (for to follow him she was resolved) with revived spirits.

Honoria was as much inclined to seclude herself as was her sister, for she rejoiced in being able to avoid Captain G. to whom she had taken a dislike, chiefly because it was obvious he wanted her to think him agreeable, and when he intended to

look fascinating, his ill assorted features assumed a cast so much resembling that of a grinning mastiff, and presenting such a contrast to the sweet, bright, glowing countenance, she had ever in her mind's eye, that she turned from him in disgust, and always thought what a luxury it would be, to turn her gaze from such an object, on the sparkling eyes and endearing smile of Spencer Burlington!

Then would follow a severe self arraignment for encouraging the remembrance of one, whom she never could reflect on, but with the most painful regret. Yet that remembrance would continually recur, whether she encouraged it or not; and but for the peculiarly unfortunate circumstance, that now took them from their country, she would have rejoiced that she was going to visit strange scenes, which might

change the current of her thoughts, and ultimately the nature of her feelings in regard to him, who had too long usurped the first place in her heart.

We will leave the sisters to pursue their voyage under favourable, but moderate breezes, while we revert to the unhappy husband, and render apparent the reasons of his being such.

CHAPTER XIV.

O jealousy! thou aggregate of woes!
Were there no hell, thy torments would create one.
HANNAH MORE.

MAJOR Burlington's health had suffered extremely during the whole of his late campaign. His constitution, which had been so violently shaken by what he had before suffered in the service of his country, was not proof against a renewal of fatigues and exertions almost too much for human strength in its utmost vigour to sustain.

The very first night that his regiment *bivouaced*, after his rejoining it, discovered to the Major that he was

no longer fit for a soldier. The aching limbs, stiff joints, and swimming head, with which he rose from his bed of earth, forced him to acknowledge within himself, that he was only fit to live quietly at Edenvale; to be nursed by his wife; revived again by the influence of her genial smiles, and kept in tolerable health by her constant solicitude and watchful care. Yet he relaxed not in one point of duty; nor ever, till his indisposition became too obvious to be concealed, would he confess that he experienced any inconvenience; and nothing offended him so much as to tell him he appeared fatigued, or looked ill.

Now, when obliged to *bivouac*, he would lay himself beside the favourite Rinaldo, who had already borne him through many a bloody field, and, imbibing a portion of his warmth, in some measure counteract the ill effects of the torrents of rain that fell

on both alike. He would rest his head on the sleek side of the charger, and press it closer as he thought how often he had borne the beloved brother who was lost to him. Then his wife, his home, would mingle in the picture; tears would escape his eyelids, and trickle over Rinaldo's shining coat. Week after week, month after month, passed on; sometimes a short respite from actual exertion gave the Major time to recruit his strength; when, again, hardships, deprivations, and excess of exertion, reduced him to the most precarious state—while frequent fits of the ague, and intermitting fever, undermined his constitution, and rendered him on every fresh occasion less capable of sustaining the toils of war. Though strenuously advised by all his military friends to request leave of absence, (which would immediately have been granted on a representation of his

state of health) and to return home, no persuasion could induce him to quit his regiment while it was engaged in actual service; till, in a partial action, he received a wound in his side, which, though not severe in itself, occasioned an effusion of blood, too likely to prove fatal in his debilitated state, and might therefore justly be termed *dangerous*. The medical men gave it as their decided opinion, that he could not survive if he remained in Portugal, and that less hazard would be incurred by moving him, than permitting him to remain in a situation where he must be totally deprived of such things as were essential to his recovery. He was accordingly conveyed to Lisbon; and, on being disappointed of his passage in the Mermaid, gladly availed himself of the subsequent opportunity of going with Captain Harrowville. Quiet and total inaction were the best

specifics that could have been administered; and, by the time he landed, he was able to walk with a firm step, and a slight tinge of colour dyed his cheeks.

He set off from Plymouth, as has before appeared; for his impatience to behold his Ella was not to be restrained, and finding, as he proceeded on the way, that the anticipation of their approaching meeting agitated him to a degree that affected his whole frame, he endeavoured to calm his feelings, and divert his thoughts from the subject, by the perusal of a newspaper he had picked up at the inn. He knew not what he read till the familiar name of Sir Francis Heathcote met his eye. The Baronet was mentioned among other fashionables that had left town, and it was added that he had departed for the seat of Colonel Skeller.

This was quite sufficient to throw

the Major into a gloomy fit. What business had the wretch in that neighbourhood?

All his anticipated joy was blasted by the idea that this man had been in his wife's presence during his absence, and the remembrance of how solemnly she had promised never to speak to him again was insufficient to quell his uneasiness. In this mood he stopped, about one in the morning, to change horses; and, as he was awaiting at the inn door, he observed a man gallop up to it, alight, and enter. In a few moments the master came out, and ordered that the fresh horses should not be put to the chaise, as he could not spare them, for they were bespoken. Major Burlington remonstrated very warmly, when the landlord returned that the horses were engaged by Sir Francis Heathcote to convey a lady from his house at daylight, and he would not dis-

oblige Sir Francis for any living creature; for he owed him every thing, as he had once been his master, and was now his son's. The Major actually flew into a passion, which was very unusual with him; but the name of Sir Francis Heathcote, at that moment, was enough to excite it. He spoke to the landlord in the most authoritative tone—commanded the horses to be put too—in short, assumed an aspect that alarmed his opponent, who said he would go and consult with his son. This son was Francis's valet, who waited within to be certified that he could have the horses: perfect confidence existed between him and his father; and their conversation was overheard by Burlington, as he sat on a bench outside an open window.

"What am I to do with this gentleman?" said the father, "he makes such a fuss about the horses. Do

you think Sir Francis would be angry if you were to say the horses were gone out before you came? I could not help that, you know."

"No, no, that won't do," returned the son; "our plan has gone on so smoothly, that it must not be interrupted at the close. What do you think of this being the very lady my master has been after so long, and that he was going to be married to last summer, before you left him, only she gave him the slip. But he has got her now snug enough. We took her up a little way from her house there, as we returned from Colonel Skeller's, all in the dark, safe enough, you know; and she has consented to stay at my master's to night; but we must pack her off before daylight, for fear of consequences, and we *must* have the horses to take her, for we can't send any of *our* carriages, as that might tell tales."

"What!" cried the father in astonishment, "do you mean the beautiful Miss Valency that was at Weymouth? she who married that poor sick man that put Sir Francis's nose out of joint?"

"The same—*now* Mrs. Burlington," said the valet. The Major heard no more: he had listened, transfixed with horror, till a violent singing in his ears deadened his oral faculties; his head began to whirl, and he fell senseless along the bench. When the father and son came out they thought he had fallen asleep, though rather surprised that his rage should so soon be quelled; the horses were reconducted to the stable, the valet departed, and the landlord went to bed, after bidding the ostler, who sat up for the mail, to attend to the sleeping gentleman, and when he awoke, to tell him he might have a bed there if he chose.

A considerable time elapsed before the distracted husband recovered the unclouded use of his faculties, and he doubted the evidence of his senses, till the sound of a carriage driving out of the inn yard convinced him he was awake. He heard a man say, "Drive as fast as you can to Sir Francis Heathcote's." This was Stephens, when he the second time returned for the chaise. Burlington knew not how long he had remained insensible; but supposed that several hours had elapsed, and that this was the carriage going, as it had been ordered, to convey his wife from the scene of iniquity. And yet his heart rejected the possibility of her being criminal! but demonstration was in his power. He flew after the chaise, and sprung up behind; obscurity concealed him, and thus was he borne to the very spot where all his suspicions were verified. He quitted his situation before the

carriage stopped, and though unperceived, was not many paces from his wife when she stepped into the chaise. The light flashed upon her face; he beheld her; he heard her exclaim, "*Thank Heaven, it is still dark; I dreaded that daylight would have surprised us here.*"

Why should she be thankful it was dark? What could she dread from daylight but detection? Her guilt could no longer be doubted!

His first impulse was to rush into the house, and annihilate the author of his dishonour; but his was not a nature that could harbour, for a second moment, the idea of murder and assassination. He flew from the spot, afraid to trust himself so near the wretch who could tempt him to a crime so horrible. To escape to the very extremity of the earth, to hide for ever his degraded head, and never again meet the eye of a single human

being, was now his only wish. In demanding satisfaction of Sir Francis, according to the modern laws of honour, he must have exposed the woman, whose fame he still held dearer than any thing on earth, to shame and infamy, which he still trusted she would escape from the precautions that appeared to have been taken to preserve secrecy. Independent of that consideration, he knew enough of Sir Francis to be certain he would evade fighting, and by endeavouring to compel him to it, the affair must be made public. No, he would fly to the country, which he knew must prove fatal to him; and all his wrongs would speedily be buried in the grave, which he should descend to without the dread he must have experienced if loaded with the murder even of his bitterest enemy; and he should at least have satisfaction in the consciousness that he had stifled the voice

of revenge, and done all in his power to spare *her* who had most injured him. Against her he felt a stronger degree of indignation, than even against her supposed betrayer. Loving her as he did, Edgar could not wonder at an unprincipled man going any length, when instigated by a passion she was so formed to inspire; but she it was, who had permitted him to succeed, who had broken the most sacred vows, and outraged the tenderest ties, and was therefore most justly the object of indignation.

It cannot be supposed that these ideas could pass regularly through his mind, under his first paroxysm of despair, but at break of day he had found himself in a high road, along which a stage coach was advancing; the driver observing him, asked him if he wanted to go to Plymouth, when he answered in the affirmative, and took possession of a seat in it. Then,

by degress, he was able to arrange his thoughts; and determined to re-embark immediately for Portugal, recollecting that he had left a fleet on the eve of sailing the preceding day.

To his wife's female companion he gave not a thought, having had eyes only for Ella, neither was he aware of what road their carriage had pursued, and he must have passed it in the coach which proceeded so much faster, as to reach its destination an hour sooner than the chaise. Desperation seemed to have nerved the Major's frame, and imparted to it an unnatural strength, which enabled him promptly, and fully to execute his design. He found no difficulty in procuring a passage, and then returned to the hotel with the intention of addressing a few lines to Ella, indicative of his feelings; but he found it utterly impossible, and had just given up the attempt, when the sudden en-

rance of Honoria, excited sensations hich may now be fully understood, s well as the violence of his behavi- ur on Ella's subsequent appearance. He could only conclude that she neant completely to impose upon him nder the persuasion that her infidelity ould never come to his knowledge, nd that she had even repaired to Ply- nouth to meet him, in order to deceive im to perfection. How Honoria appened to be with her, he could not comprehend, but gave very little re- lection to that circumstance, his whole mind being engrossed with the overwhelming conviction of his misery and disgrace.

Ten minutes after he had left the unfortunate sisters at the hotel, he was on board a ship, where his body again yielded to excess of exertion, and his mind sunk to the lowest ebb of des- pair!

CHAPTER XV.

The sons of Spain the hero's deeds aver,
And proudly hail him Spain's Deliverer!
HAMILTON ROCHE'S SALAMANCA.

It was a fortnight from the time of their embarkation, when Mrs. Burlington and her sister landed at Lisbon; Captain G. having previously gone on shore and ascertained that the Major had landed three days bofore, and immediately set off to join his regiment, then acting with the army in Spain. Mrs. Burlington was resolved to pursue the same route, and on this occasion too, she had great cause to feel obliged to Captain G. who arranged every thing for their journey, pro-

curing them mules, guides, &c. and all that was essential to their comfort and convenience, nor would he permit them to land till every thing was ready for their departure. He had himself travelled both in Portugal and Spain, and therefore could instruct them how to proceed, in order to avoid many inconveniences they would otherwise have been liable to. He accompanied their little cavalcade a few miles on the road, and left them with regret, amidst their heartfelt expression of gratitude.

Ella had no attention to give to outward objects, her spirit never faltered, her strength never failed her in the prosecution of her design, but she could think of nothing but its object. To Honoria, the novelty of the scene would have been amusing, had her mind been more at ease; for as they advanced on their journey, the surrounding country claimed her admira-

tion. There was something romantic in the situation in which she found herself, the countenances of their guides and attendants, were an entertaining study, their gestures amused her eye, their language her ear, though she understood it but imperfectly; she had studied it a little, as well as the Spanish. The scenery through which they passed, she had so often heard described, as to seem almost familiar with it, and she felt a peculiar interest in looking out for those objects alledged to be so worthy of attention. The desire of improvement was inseparable from her mind, and she resolved not to neglect this unexpected opportunity of enlarging her knowledge, but to cast an eye of observation on every object, that she might not appear as if she had passed through the country blindfold. They found accommodation for the night at a private house in an almost deserted

village, where (as they had been informed it was customary) they applied to be received, and were treated with much civility by persons whom they found no difficulty in persuading to accept a suitable remuneration for their hospitality.

Now, as they advanced into the country, the traces of desolation became apparent: on every side the scourge of war seemed to have extended its depopulating influence, and denoted the frequent theatre of battles lost and won by contending armies, who each in their turn became the conquerors. There the rich stacks of grain were reduced to a heap of black ashes, and near it tottered the roofless house, half fallen to the ground. Now they passed a hamlet wholly deserted, and there the plain was rendered irregular by the frequent tumulose, that bespoke the spot where many heroes lay mingled

in one common grave. On one occasion Honoria pointed out to her sister the uniform of a soldier, partially appearing from a dyke by the road side; but what horror did she experience, when, on a nearer approach, she perceived it was only the apparel of a form that lay mouldering within. It was long ere they could recover the impression made by such a sight, and which was, unfortunately, now repeatedly renewed by the recurrence of similar objects:

" It might have tam'd a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band.
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown.
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare fram'd her lowly nest.
There the slow blind-worm left his slime,
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time.
And there too lay the leader's skull,
Still wreath'd with chaplet flush'd and full;

For heathbell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume."*

However distressed and affected by such shocking spectacles, yet our fair travellers were never disheartened, or inclined to falter in their purpose; for it is a fact established by repeated proof, that what a female resolutely undertakes, with a determination to go through with, no difficulty or hazard will deter her from the accomplishing! and that she will sustain and overcome dangers and vicissitudes, which, under other circumstances, she would tremble but to think of!

Our adventurers had nothing to apprehend from the enemy, who were now driven back to the interior of Spain, still pursued by the conquerors, and no soldiers were to be seen in the tract of country our party tra-

*Lady of the Lake.

versed, excepting now and then a few stragglers, who having been left behind in the hospitals, were on their route to join their respective corps. Little difficulty occurred in procuring tolerable accommodations each night, for even the better sort of inhabitants of those towns which had been so repeatedly sacked, were reduced to a state of poverty, which rendered them glad to offer civilities, for which they were handsomely remunerated. It was no uncommon thing to see the wives of officers pursuing their husbands in that manner; it therefore excited no curiosity. They were gaining fast on the frontiers of Portugal, when they one evening found themselves in a more romantic tract of country than they had yet passed; and, after winding for a considerable distance down a steep declivity, they came suddenly on a picturesque structure, which seemed to have

scaped the ravages of war, and ooked like the very abode of its opposing spirit. It seemed impossible that the war-pipe could ever have sounded through those glens, or the shrill trumpet re-echoed from those mountains.

Our travellers surveyed this pleasant residence with a wistful eye; and thought how fortunate they should esteem themselves, could they find admission there for the night. They halted before it, hoping some hospitable inmate would appear to encourage their application. But "solitude had mark'd it as its own;" and, on descending from their mules, and approaching the windows, to ascertain if it was inhabited, they perceived that the "spoiler's hand" had been there also; for the interior was robbed of all appearance of comfort, the furniture broken, the hangings torn down, and the walls disfigured.

They turned from the scene with sorrowful feelings, and were returning to their mules, when Honoria espied something white within a little porch overshadowed with shrubs.

She returned to ascertain what it was, and perceived a little white dog squeezing itself close up to the door, reduced to a skeleton, and trembling with hunger, while he retained not sufficient strength to whine out his sorrows. She was much shocked, yet felt a species of satisfaction in the hope that she could relieve the poor little *barbet;* and, resorting to their store of provisions, she gave it as large a portion as she conceived might with safety be allowed it. He devoured it voraciously, and was instantly revived, as he wagged his tail, and licked the hand that supplied him. In Honoria's opinion, there was but one step to be taken in regard to the barbet, which was to take

him up in her arms, and carry him away with her, heedless of any trouble, or annoyance, he might occasion her. She doubted not that he had once been an indulged favourite; perhaps all who would have succoured him, as a part of their family, had been put to the sword, yet *he* still remained, faithful even to their habitation. She resolved he should still be an indulged favourite, as she remounted her mule, and carried off the barbet, who seemed perfectly satisfied with his situation, and evinced his gratitude as eloquently as he could. The dog was naturally of a very small breed, and therefore could be carried without any inconvenience; but, for its reduced state, it would have been very beautiful; but Honoria only designed to retain it till she could find some one willing to accept, and make a pet of it, as she feared it would stray from them,

and be again lost, when more important things should demand her attention. She perceived that it wore a collar, which at her leisure she examined, and found inscribed on it, "*Count de L'Arevalo.*"

On that night they were not so fortunate as they had before been, as their accommodations were very homely indeed; but, to make up for it, they had a very communicative host, who satisfied their eager inquiries concerning the progress and present situation of the army. He said, it was not many days since the very place they were in had been full of troops; but they had now driven the enemy beyond Salamanca, and the allied army remained in the vicinity of that place, where a general action was daily expected; as Marmont had rallied, and, it was supposed, would make a desperate effort to recover his ground. The host ad-

vised the ladies by no means to approach nearer to the theatre of war, as a few days might carry them into the very heart of the battle. Ella trembled, but not for herself—but at the thoughts of what her husband must be exposed to. She paid very little attention to the host's advice, still determined to advance near enough to obtain accurate intelligence from the very scene of action. She knew to what brigade her husband's regiment was attached; and, if it was not actually engaged, she would run all risks to join him.

Honoria was a little startled at the idea of approaching so near to the enemy; but the allies were still between them, and, should they be compelled to retreat, they would still prove protectors—at least, so Honoria argued. She endeavoured to prevail on their host to take a fancy to her little dog; but he declined ac-

cepting the charge; and she hardly regretted it, for the poor little animal was so much afraid of every body but her, and seemed so to claim her protection by never stirring from her side, that she would hardly have had the heart to part from him, and she now determined to retain him as long as she could. She asked the host if he knew any thing of the person whose name was on the dog's collar? Having looked at it, he replied, "Aye, that I do, indeed! there is not a chief in the army better known than the brave Count! Have you not heard of L'Arevalo's Guerrillas?—then you are a stranger indeed! No corps has more distinguished itself than this gallant band; but I fear their valiant leader has fallen, by your having found his dog."

"Perhaps not," returned Honoria; "he may have strayed from him: but

I should never have taken this dog for the favourite of a warrior chief."

The host smiled, and observed, it was more probably the favourite of some fair lady who had presented it to him. Honoria asked if the Count's residence was *that*, near which she had found the dog?—to which the host replied,

"No; the Count is a Spaniard; and I never heard that he had any possessions in Portugal."

"But," said Honoria, "since you know so much of him, had you not better retain the dog; you may have an opportunity of restoring it to him; and he would, doubtless, reward any one who had taken great care of it."

"Then I must send him to the other world, I fancy; for I don't think I shall find the Count any where else. He is always in the heart of danger, and there is no doubt of his being killed sooner or

later; for they are all cut off one after the other: we hardly hear them cried up, before we hear that they are killed; so then you know, signora, I should have to keep the dog."

"Well, then, poor Chico *must* go with me," said Honoria, who called him by the name the guide had given him in allusion to his size.

She procured a little basket to carry him in, and began to consider him as her own, and to grow fond of him accordingly.

CHAPTER XVI.

Is yon red glare the western star?
O! 'tis the beacon blaze of war!
Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,
For well she knew the fire of death!

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

THEY re-commenced their journey with the dawn, and pursued it, for two succeeding days, in all that increasing anxiety, which their approach towards the scene of inexpressible interest was so calculated to excite. Once more they halted for the night at a lone house, occupied only by peasants, but which had once been the residence of persons in a superior station.

The ladies were congratulating themselves on their accommodation, when they perceived a party of soldiers march up to the door, and found that it was to be admitted also.

They now descended from their mules, and entered with reluctance, concluding that they should be annoyed by all the noise and confusion incident to a public house; but they were conducted to a distant part of the building, where their quiet was not disturbed.

Honoria addressed her sister in a voice now *unusually* cheerful, saying, "Did you particularly observe those soldiers? they were dismounted dragoons!"

"Indeed!" cried Ella eagerly; "let us inquire what regiment they belong to."

"I can tell you," returned Honoria; "I observed what was on their breast-plates, and it was just as we

could wish. There was a sergeant with them, and——"

"O! let us interrogate him," interrupted Ella; and their attendant was immediately sent to summon him.

Though Ella had never joined her husband's regiment, she felt an affinity to every one that belonged to it, and a claim on their good offices. The sergeant, a respectable intelligent man, now appeared; but, on being questioned for tidings respecting Major Burlington, he said that he himself had not been with the regiment for several weeks, having been left behind at the hospital; but that he was now hastening to rejoin it, with the men under his command, and hoped to come up with it the next day; and if the ladies had any letter or message to send to the Major, he should be proud to deliver it. Ella demurred, and looked at her

sister, who whispered, "Had we not better put ourselves under the conduct of this man?—only tell him who you are, and you will secure his services."

"That is just what I was meditating," returned Ella; "then we shall be sure of reaching the quarters of the regiment without difficulty."

This seemed an advisable plan; and, accordingly, Ella informed the sergeant, that she was the wife of Major Burlington, and, being under great anxiety concerning him, she was resolved to follow, and remain near him; but that, not being certain of the situation of the regiment, their little cavalcade should proceed in the morning at the same time with his party, and they should be obliged to him for his escort. The sergeant expressed the satisfaction it would give him to be in any way useful to the ladies,—more particularly as they

were connected with his Major, of whom he spoke in terms which made Ella his friend for life.

This matter arranged, the sisters felt as if half their perplexities were suddenly done away; and, with a sensation of security, stretched themselves on their mattrass, which was one of their travelling *companions*, and endeavoured to obtain a respite from harassing anticipations. But in vain, for not on any night since they had set off, had they been so totally deprived of sleep; but the idea of the next day was pregnant with too strong an interest to permit them to sink into oblivion.

Chico could now *bark* as well as he could *eat*, and from time to time *amused* them by springing off their feet, and making their ears re-echo with his shrill note, as some accidental noise alarmed his vigilance. But though he disturbed their nerves,

he broke not their slumbers; and as soon as the first saffron streak, still tinged with the inky hue of night, appeared in the east, they arose and prepared for their departure.

The morning proved cloudy and tempestuous, and kept them in momentary apprehension of the threatening deluge; and that the rain which there falls with such peculiar violence should impede their progress, and compel them to restrain their impatience. But though the lowering atmosphere enveloped the tops of the mountains, and cast a sullen gloom over every object, the torrent did not descend, at least till they were beyond its influence; and they proceeded with their augmented train, soldiers, guides, attendants, &c. making quite a formidable party.

Towards the middle of the day the sky began to clear, and the sun seemed inclined to shine forth. They were

slowly ascending a mountain, when Ella suddenly stopped her mule, exclaiming, "Hark!"

They all listened: Ella turned her eyes on the sergeant; Honoria said, "I have heard it for some time."

"So have I, ma'am," said the sergeant. "It is the report of the great guns; the army is engaged; you may hear them continually if you listen, ma'am. There is a general action I am sure. You need not be alarmed ladies;" he continued, observing them change colour. "I dare say they are ten or fifteen miles off; you can hear the artillery at a great distance. Honoria felt a strong degree of horror, as she considered that death and destruction attended every report that she heard; even, in a general sense, this was shocking to the soul, but how much more so when believing that he, in whom they had so dear an interest, was exposed to such immi-

nent peril. But she found she must not indulge her own feelings, nor enervate her mind by such appalling reflections; for her sister's obvious disorder demanded all her solicitude, and Ella's spirits now, for the first time since they had commenced their journey, suddenly gave way.

Honoria proposed stopping, observing that the allies might be repulsed.

"Impossible, impossible, madam," cried the sergeant, "we had better hasten forward as fast as we can."

"Aye, forward, forward," cried several of the soldiers, running up the hill; "we shall at worst be in time to see the Frenchmen's backs."

"I would rather be in time to make them turn them," said the sergeant.

CHAPTER XVII.

O'erspread with shatter'd arms the ground appears,
With broken bucklers, and with shiver'd spears;
Here swords are stuck in hapless warriors killed,
And useless there, are scatter'd o'er the field.
Here on their face the breathless bodies lie,
There turn their ghastly features to the sky!
Beside his lord the courser press'd the plain,
Beside his slaughter'd friend, the friend is slain;
Foe near to foe; and on the vanquish'd spread,
The victor lies, the living and the dead.

HOOLE'S TASSO.

ELLA's resolution only faltered for a few moments, when she proceeded with renewed energy, though Honoria now continually urged the propriety of their stopping at the first house that would admit them.

She began to feel extremely cowardly, thinking it not impossible, that by some manœuvre of the enemy to attack the rear of their adversary, they might fall into their power. The firing now became every moment more audible, and nearly incessant; and Ella, whose colour fluctuated to a thousand hues, at length consented to stop at the next village, and remain there till they could ascertain how far they might with propriety advance, or where it would be most expedient they should repair to. But now that they were looking out with the utmost anxiety for the appearance of some hamlet, or even lone abode, not a single human habitation met their eyes.

Having mounted another declivity, they stopped for a few minutes to refresh their mules. A sudden shout from the soldiers electrified the ladies. They cast their eyes in the direction

to which the soldiers pointed, and beheld a plain of several miles extending beneath them; and, nearly as far as their sight could reach, they perceived columns of smoke ascending in various directions. Sometimes it rose in an extended line, and had scarcely gained the clouds, when another volume followed, producing so intense a vapour as to render its source imperceptible. Then it suddenly burst forth at distinct distances, and the smoke more condensed, rose in columns to the skies; the thunder which preceded this eruption, and which reverberated from every intervening object till it seemed to roar in the ears of our trembling sisters, was an evidence that could not be mistaken.

"*The Plains of Salamanca!*" cried the guides. "The field of battle!" exclaimed the sergeant, which was instantly followed by a triple huzza!

from the soldiers. Ella dropped from her mule. She sunk on her knees. She clasped her hands. She rung them, and called on Heaven! scarcely conscious of what she said. Then started up. Pointed to the distant scene, cast a piteous glance on her sister, then hastily remounted her mule; and all with a rapidity and wildness in her looks, that denoted she was not mistress of herself.

Honoria could scarcely speak articulately, but she endeavoured to direct her sister's attention to a village now in view; and the sergeant observing their dismay, assured them they were yet five or six miles from the place where they perceived the smoke, and would be perfectly safe at the hamlet which they hastened to attain.

"This was the memorable twenty-second of July, eighteen hundred and twelve! a day which added another

layer to the fabric of our national glory. A day, which as the stream of time carries it down to our long descending posterity, every generation shall hail as a proud memorial of their ancestors! On the morning of that day, which arose in clouds and tempests on the face of nature; and in anxiety and expectation on the minds of so many, but which finished in a bright and glorious setting sun, radiating and illuminating the heavens around, but not more bright and glorious than its accompanying victory. On the morning of this day, the two armies found themselves on the field of battle. Lord Wellington covering the town of Salamanca and the road to Ciudad Rodrigo, and Marmont extending along a hill and a plain in front of him. The field of battle may be thus briefly described. The river Tormes washes the walls of Salamanca, and thence flows about

twenty miles to the south to Alva de Tormes, after which it takes a turn, or sweep, to the west, where it meets the feet and high ground of the Portuguese frontier. These high grounds are parallel to that part of the river which, as above described, flows southerly from Salamanca. The field of battle, therefore, was a kind of long parallelogram of about twenty miles from north to south, and six or eight from east to west. The northern side was Salamanca. The eastern and southern sides the course of the Tormes, (between which river and the Portuguese frontier, the two armies were) and the western side the high ground of the Portuguese frontier;"— from whence our travellers advanced.

Honoria thought she could perceive, at no great distance from them, the forms of men and horses scattered over the plain, as if, in the former part of the day, the battle had raged

in that very place; indeed the wadding which she perceived strewed over the discoloured turf, and the smell of gunpowder that still remained even in the tract they were pursuing, proved her conclusions to be just. She rode close beside her sister, and in such a manner as to obstruct her view of those objects she most feared she should discern, as she dreaded she might meditate the horrible task of ascertaining if her husband were among the slain in that quarter. Honoria would have trembled to have approached, even to one of the horses, lest she should have discovered it to be Rinaldo! How gladly did she perceive that they were gaining fast upon the village, which they soon after entered. But it bore not that quiet, deserted appearance, which had marked most of those which they had passed through; on the contrary, all seemed bustle and confusion. It

was evident that numbers of the wounded had been brought to that place, and that the inhabitants were busied in affording them all the assistance in their power, and administering to their wants; while the houses had become so crowded, that many of the unfortunate sufferers were laid on piles of straw outside the doors, with a sheet thrown over them, whence their groans, and exclamations of anguish, were audible.

What a scene! what sounds for those who knew not but that he, in whom they were most interested, might be among the number of the tortured. They were borne on by their mules, hardly conscious of their progress, and were almost congealed with horror: when they were aroused by the voice of the sergeant, who said he must now quit them and hasten forward; but he directed their attention to an extensive mansion that rose

a little above the village, observing that they probably might be accommodated there, as the original owner had doubtless quitted it, and it was most likely occupied by those who would willingly receive the ladies. The sergeant faithfully promised, that if he survived when the fate of the day was decided, he would take measures for informing them of every particular interesting to them. Ella had before cautioned him, that should he see her husband before she had an opportunity of apprizing him of her approach, to be careful not to divulge to him her near vicinity; but to let her know, as soon as possible, where she might find him, and *she* would take the proper steps for preparing him to expect her. One of the muleteers having ascended to the great house to know if they could be admitted, and returned with a favour-

able answer, the sergeant once more promised to remember them, and he and his party marched forward with active steps and looks of intrepidity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Not his the nerves that could sustain,
Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain;
But when the spark blaz'd forth to flame
He rose superior to his frame.

ROKEBY.

Our adventurers now approached the mansion which had evidently been the residence of some grandee of distinction; as the appearance of every thing around it indicated fallen grandeur, and some remains of taste.

The grand portal stood open, but they saw not a single creature whom they could interrogate. Descending from their mules, they entered what had once been a banquetting hall; but which, it was now very apparent,

had recently been degraded to the purposes of a stable, as well as two other magnificent apartments, at either end of the hall. The floors were covered with litter, and the massy frames of the enormous mirrors, the plates of which had been long since destroyed, were torn down and separated, to make bars to divide the horses, and the elegant gilt cornices peeped out between the temporary mangers that had been erected.

But the late, as well as the former occupants had now disappeared; desertion and ruin alone were visible, and the ladies returned to question the muleteer, who had first repaired to the house. He informed them, that he had spoken to a woman, whom he now pointed out to them, standing on a mount at the end of the garden; she appeared to be applying a telescope to her eye. Ella and Honoria hastened to approach her;

the sight of a respectable looking female was a comfort, but how much more so from her being attired like an English woman. On that account they addressed her in their own language, at which she turned with precipitation, exclaiming,

" Poor unfortunate ladies, what could have brought you here at such a terrible time? Are your husbands engaged in that dreadful field that I have been looking at till my eyes ache? Oh! *mine* is there also," she continued, bursting into tears; " with the best of masters; and, oh dear! perhaps they are both killed by this time."

"O Sarah, Sarah!" was ejaculated by both sisters, as each seized a hand of the good woman, who was no other than the wife of Major Burlington's private servant. Having no children she had accompanied him abroad, and always continued near him. She

had been a servant at the cottage, and had married from thence shortly after Ella. It is difficult to say, whether she was most grieved or delighted at this unexpected meeting, and so overwhelmed was she with surprise, and contending emotions, as to be unable for some time to give any intelligent account of the Major. But when she saw Ella nearly fainting with apprehension, she recovered the free exercise of her faculties, and briefly related the interesting narrative, which was only interrupted by the frequent exclamation of "God preserve them!" when the thunder of the cannon came sometimes louder on their ears, making them start, and throw up their eyes and hands in supplication.

Sarah first informed them, that her husband had accompanied the Major that morning to the field, in order that he might be near to succour and assist him, in case of his being dis-

abled; but that he had followed him positively against the Major's commands, as he wished to have spared him the danger he must be exposed to. She then reverted to what had passed before.

The village where they now were had been several times the head quarters of the Major's regiment since it had entered Spain, and had been stationed there when he had been compelled to quit it the last time for his native country. But always trusting he should be able shortly to return to his duty, he determined to leave his favourite Rinaldo with the regiment, and his own man to take care that he was properly attended to. He was further induced to dispense with the services of his domestic, from his reluctance to give him, and his wife, the trouble of a journey and voyage, they might so soon have to repeat. His own quarter had

been some of the chambers in this grand *chateau*, the lower part of which they appropriated as stables, and the upper part as barracks; and here Sarah, her husband, and Rinaldo, had remained, during the Major's absence, independent of the movements of the regiment; and *here* they were surprised by his unexpected return a few days prior to the battle of Salamanca, or (as it has sometimes been termed) of Arapiles.

He then looked nearly as ill as before his departure, and his mind appeared infinitely more affected. He never accounted in any way for his return, secluded himself entirely, except when engaged in military duty, and never spoke but from necessity. A squadron of his regiment was then stationed at their old quarter, and it chanced to be that to which he was properly attached. Until the day of the grand battle his division had not

been engaged in any actual service; but he would re-enter from a simple inspection, almost in a fainting state; and Sarah, who had attended him through his former illness in that country, soon discovered that his ague and fever had returned. But he was perfectly unmanageable in regard to taking care of himself, and Sarah really thought his intellects deranged, when she found that he was actually resolved to head his squadron in the field of battle. Her husband, who believed that he would sink from his horse with fatigue and sickness, before a single shot was fired, determined never to lose sight of him, but to be near to afford his ready aid. But several hours had now elapsed, and no tidings had been received, either of the Major, or his attendant.

Sarah, in the course of her relation, did not so minutely describe her master's situation as we have here

delineated it, and Ella was led to believe him better than she had dared to expect. Honoria appeased Sarah's curiosity, by observing that the Major had imagined himself well enough to do his duty, which had induced him to return to it, instead of prosecuting his intention of going home; on hearing which, Mrs. Burlington determined, as she had always designed, to join him abroad; but as he probably did not expect her so soon, they must be very cautious in apprizing him of her arrival.

Sarah now conducted them back to the house, and they found themselves in the chamber where, only the night before, the Major had reposed. Sarah had arranged the apartment very comfortably, and *here* Ella saw all those vestiges of her husband's recent occupation, so calculated to affect her feelings in their present critical state. She sat down on the side

of the bed; and indulged a burst of affliction. Honoria's tears fell also, as she retired with Sarah, leaving her sister for a short time to relieve her full heart. Sarah conducted her to an adjoining apartment, which she and her husband had occupied, but which she proposed resigning to the ladies. She seized this opportunity of informing Honoria of the Major's real state, wishing to consult her on how it would be best to proceed. But Honoria answered her not. They were standing at a window, and instead of replying, Honoria exclaimed, "Oh! look, look, Sarah! look at that horse flying over the plain without a rider, and his bridle waving loose in the wind!"

"O merciful Goodness!" exclaimed Sarah, "it looks like Rinaldo!"—Both flew from the apartment, and hastened to descend, for the animal seemed making for that direction,

which further confirmed their suspicions, and wrought Honoria's apprehensions for the Major to the highest pitch.

CHAPTER XIX.

But hark! thro' the fast flashing lightning of war,
What Steed to the desart flies frantic and far?
Tis thine oh, Glenneling! whose bride shall await,
Like a lovelighted watch-fire, all night at the gate;
A steed comes at morning, no rider is there,
And his bridle is red with the sign of despair!

CAMPBELL.

HONORIA and her attendant reached the court-yard just as the bounding steed flew across it to the place appropriated as his stable. But fleet as were his movements, it did not prevent Honoria's perceiving a stream of blood issuing from his neck, by which his progress might be traced.

"It *is*, it *is*, Rinaldo!" cried Honoria, turning deadly pale, and leaning against the wall for support. "He

is wounded! O Sarah, Sarah, what shall we do?"

"I will run for the old Spaniard, madam, that lives in the village, he shoes horses, and perhaps he understands something about them."

Sarah disappeared, and Honoria endeavoured to shake off the weakness that oppressed her, and at length ventured to approach the place Rinaldo had entered, but she was afraid to go in, for she heard him trotting round and round, unable to settle himslf, and as if he was looking for some one to relieve his pain, while he neighed and snorted in a wild and frightened manner.

She now climbed upon a heap of stones outside the window, through which she regarded him. "Rinaldo, Rinaldo!" she cried, "dear, beautiful Rinaldo! my poor, poor Rinaldo. O that I could do any thing to relieve you."

The moment he heard her voice he became stationary; his fine neck curved towards her, his ears were pricked up, and his eyes glared on her face. But the next moment he trotted to the window and stood under it. The wildness of his looks suddenly subsided, his ears fell back, the fire of his eye was quelled, and he held up his nose, as if he expected it to be rubbed. Accustomed to be carressed and played with, even by the females of the family, he no sooner heard the gentle voice, than he became tame. Honoria could just reach to stroke his forehead, but she hastily withdrew her hand, when, all at once his eyes began to roll, and his hind quarters seemed sinking under him. He gave one violent plunge, and fell heavy on his side as his tongue lolled from his mouth.

"He is dead! he is dead!" screamed Honoria, jumping from the pile,

to run she knew not whither. But Sarah and the Spanish blacksmith arrested her progress, and the latter relieved as strong a degree of anxiety, as one of the brute creation could excite, when, after surveying the noble animal, he pronounced him to be still alive; but the quantity of blood he had lost in his flight, had, at length, completely subdued his strength. A musket-ball had lodged in his neck, but the wound did not appear to be dangerous.

While the man was giving them this assurance, Honoria felt Sarah pull her by the sleeve; and, on looking at her, she perceived her countenance convulsed, her lips pale and quivering, and, though she strove to articulate, she could not for some time, when she stammered:

"My husband! O, ma'am! Barnet, my husband!"

"What of him! has any thing happened to him?" cried Honoria.

"O, no, no, ma'am! but he is coming across the plain, ma'am, and ——"

"And what!"

"O, ma'am, pray don't be so frightened, but I fancy the Major has fainted; for I see they are carrying some body along."

Honoria clung by Sarah's arm, for she feared she should sink to the earth; yet she wanted to tell her to run to meet them, and ascertain the worst at once. At that moment Barnet ran into the court-yard, having hastened forward to prepare his wife for what she was to expect. He started with the most unpleasant aspect of surprise, on beholding Honoria.

"Speak, speak!" she now exclaimed, with an air of deperation; "Say at once—is he dead?"

"No, no, ma'am, *not* dead, thank God."

"Wounded then, wounded *mortally?*"

"No, indeed, not wounded at all, ma'am; only entirely overcome with fatigue."

"Merciful Heaven, I thank thee!" cried Honoria, clasping her hands together, as she flew back to the house, followed by Sarah.

"We must get my mistress out of that room, ma'am," said the latter.

"Yes, Sarah, but my very aspect will terrify her to death; I will go to your apartment, and try to look less horror-struck, and you go and tell her I want to speak to her."

Ella was endeavouring to recover some portion of composure, when the voice of Sarah, outside the door, summoned her to join her sister. She attempted to dry her tears, and repaired to the adjoining apartment,

the door of which Honoria closed, leaving Sarah outside, to afford all the assistance in her power, where it was most required; then, throwing her arms around her sister, she told her there was no *new* cause for apprehension, and that she trusted they might admit a hope that all might yet be well. "We have learnt," she continued, "that he is not wounded, but has quitted the field from fatigue."

"O where, where is he? and who told you this?" cried Ella, in all the agitation natural to her situation.

By degrees Honoria imparted to her the real circumstances of the case, and was delighted to find that joy at being so near her husband, and at his having survived the perils of the day, was predominant over every other sensation. She repeatedly exclaimed, O, that she could be permitted to nurse him, to watch by

him, to prevent his every wish; it was all that she desired! it was all that she longed for? But she was perfectly sensible, that to present herself before him at that juncture, would be to run the hazard of his life; but her whole mind was occupied in devising some scheme to enable her to attend on him, without his suspecting who she was. They listened attentively, but the walls were too thick to permit them to hear any thing that was passing in the adjoining chamber.

Honoria was now more full of apprehension, that was her sister; for Barnet's countenance had appalled her; but she had the satisfaction of knowing that the Major could have the benefit of medical assistance, as she had heard Barnet say he would run to the village for a doctor, as several of the medical staff had been *left* there to attend on the wounded.

Sarah now joined them, but seemed much distressed by Mrs. Burlington's eager interrogatories respecting her husband; she stammered and stuttered, and at length observed, that the Major certainly was not *very well;* and added, "But you know, ma'am, he has been so long subject to the ague and fever, it must have shaken him a good deal; and we could not expect but what he would be very much fatigued to-day; and to be sure he must be half choked with smoke, and stunned with the noise, and that makes him that he hardly knows where he is."

"But what did the doctor say?" asked Honoria.

"Why, ma'am, he did not *say* much, but I dare say he *thinks* the Major will get over it in time, with plenty of good nursing; and I have darkened the room, and put every thing comfortable about him, and he seems ra-

ther in a sort of a doze-*like*, just now, and Barnet is watching him, ma'am, and Rinaldo, they say, will do very well."

Poor Sarah was willing to impart all the comfort she could, but was somewhat startled when Mrs. Burlington exclaimed;

"Sarah, I must attend on him myself! who is so proper a person? whose business is it but mine? I must and will watch by him night and day, and ——"

"Dear madam! if he should happen to know you, the surprise might hurt him very much."

"*Happen* to know me!" repeated Ella, with a look of anguish; "Ah! Sarah, you have betrayed that he has not the full use of his faculties; but go, go, and fetch me some of your clothes, I will dress myself exactly like you. Lend me that large bonnet you have on! you say the room is

darkened, and if he speaks, I can answer him in a whisper; in the state to which it is too evident he is reduced, he will pay no attention to his attendants. Go, Sarah, I am resolved; I must be at my post. Fear not," she continued to Honoria, whose looks betrayed dread and anxiety, "I am too fully aware of the consequences of a discovery, to be in danger of betraying myself. Do not think that the trial will be too much for me, I can bear any thing if only permitted to be near him."

Honoria could not wonder at her sister's determination, nor did she attempt to dissuade her from it, as she did not conceive it would be attended with any danger to the Major, as the disguise, which Ella was not long in assuming, was very complete. When Sarah found that her mistress was positively resolved on taking up her station in the invalid's chamber, she

no longer suppressed any particulars relative to his situation, and she confessed that he had not yet betrayed any signs of perception, but that he lay in a state of torpor, though he breathed freely.

Ella was not now to be dismayed; she seemed endowed with new strength, new fortitude, and walked firmly to the door. Honoria followed, and took hold of her arm, but she said in a steady voice; "don't be alarmed, let me go, I can support any thing now, I am sure I can."

With these words she approached her husband's chamber; Honoria and Sarah listened for a short time after she had entered, but they heard nothing, and retired to the other room.

Barnet was sitting near the bed, and conceived it to be his wife who had come into the chamber, as she was nearly the same height as Ella, and *there* was not light enough to render

the features visible at a distance. Ella sat down on a chair near the door, and looked towards the bed, the remains of an old green damask curtain drawn across the foot of the bed, prevented her descrying the form within from where she sat, and she felt afraid to approach.

" His eyes are quite shut now, " said Barnet, in a whisper, I am in hopes he has fallen asleep."

Ella now ventured to step forward in such a direction as to obtain a sight of the beloved being she was so entirely devoted to; but still the obscurity prevented her perceiving the aspect of his countenance, and she feared to approach nearer, lest she should provoke an exclamation of surprise from Barnet on recognizing her, but he now softly arose, saying he must go, and see how they were going on with Rinaldo, and quitted the room without noise.

Ella advanced her trembling frame, and once more beheld those dear features it was yet delight to her to gaze on, though pallid as death, fixed, and inanimate! But there was nothing shocking in their aspect, and she felt relieved in seeing him only look extremely pale, and as if he were asleep. His head was uncovered, the warmth of the weather rendering it unnecessary to protect it from the air, his arms were thrown outside the clothes, and his shirt frill opening a little on the chest, discovered her picture laying on his bosom.

She was at once overcome. What would she not have given at that moment to have indulged the feelings that overwhelmed her? to have thrown herself on the breast of her husband, revived him by her endearments, and convinced him of her innocence. She pressed her handkerchief on her mouth to suppress her sobs, and

gliding round to the foot of the bed, she sunk on her knees, feeling that nothing but a "pouring out of her soul" in prayer could relieve or calm her sensations.

There is one grand stay of nature, to which in every extremity it points! the goal of every emotion, which there seems to have found a resting place, and to have returned to the source from whence it was derived! In communion with this great "Great First Cause!" the soul gradually recovers its tone, and becomes susceptible of moderated tumults, and capable of renewed exertion!

Ella rose from her knees with ameliorated sensations, and, sitting down by her husband's bed side, felt comparative happiness in watching his every breath.

CHAPTER XX.

Je ne connois que toi! Je ne vis que pour toi!
Le cœur de mon epoux est l'univers pour moi.

MARMONTEL.

SARAH, who was on the watch, perceived her husband quit the sick room, and soon explained away his extreme amazement at beholding her whom he supposed he had left within the chamber. He then, at Honoria's request, reverted to the preceding part of the day, and informed her of all the interesting particulars connected with it. Major Burlington had repaired to the field that morning, with a perfect conviction that he should never return from it, and had

conducted himself with all the desperation of a man eager to be relieved from an existence that was torture to him. He was always to be seen in the most exposed situations, and nothing but an especial Providence could have preserved him from the peril that so repeatedly threatened him. He went through more than nature, in so debilitated a state, could have been supposed capable of enduring; but despair gave him strength, and bore him up till the time when his intermitting disorder was wont to attack him. Then, repeatedly, he was near falling from his horse with excess of indisposition; but again rallied, till the plunge which Rinaldo gave on receiving the musket-ball in his neck, unseated his enfeebled rider, and threw him fainting on the plain.

The gentle creature quitted not his master's side, till some of those who happened to be near, and who were

strangers to him, attempted to seize the reins; when instantly he sprung off, and after bounding in various directions over the plain, made towards the place appropriated as his stable. Barnet, who, though mounted, could not always follow his master's sudden movements without interfering with the military operations, remained in the rear of the squadron, but was not many moments in reaching his side. He soon perceived that he had fainted, or was stunned by the fall, and he obtained assistance to bear him from the field; but still observing that he evinced no signs of consciousness when they had nearly reached their destination, he became extremely alarmed; and his distress on beholding Honoria, from whence he inferred that Mrs. Burlington was near, was in proportion to his apprehensions on the Major's account.

Honoria was now left to solitude,

which, under her present circumstances, she found most agreeable, nor regretted the temporary absence of her sister, who she considered as at length in her right place, and she trusted that every thing they could wish would by degrees ensue: but for three days longer they were kept on the rack, as during that period the Major's existence remained in the most perilous state. The torpor no sooner left him, than he betrayed every symptom of a violent fever; his senses were entirely bewildered, and he raved incessantly of his wife and Sir Francis Heathcote, almost driving her to a state of equal distraction; when the disorder suddenly took a favourable turn, and the physician pronounced it probable he might ultimately recover. His debility had, on this occasion, proved his best friend; as, had he been in the vigour of health when the fever attacked him, it must

have been much stronger, and inevitably have put a period to his life, as in the case of many other of his brother officers who sunk under the same disease. In respect to the Major it had a very happy effect, as its superior force seemed to have destroyed his ague and its attendant evils; nor did their symptoms return as he advanced towards convalescence.

We shall not attempt to describe Ella's feelings, nor all that she went through during this trying period; neither shall we dwell on the anguish and anxiety Honoria experienced while retaining her station, with little intermission, at the door of the invalid's chamber: but with what a light and grateful heart did she at length resign it, when assured that there were no longer any immediate apprehensions for his life, and that her sister had been prevailed on to lie down on a mattress by his bed side. He

had now again sunk into a state of total languor, but appeared to have regained possession of his senses. Honoria had long been meditating on the best method of relieving his mind from its insufferable weight; and she had written a long explanatory letter, particularizing every circumstance of their journey and its interruption, but omitting the name of the person whose stratagem had delayed them; for if the Major's jealousy did not arise from that extraordinary incident, (of which she was not *quite* certain) she determined not to be the first to enlighten him on that subject.

Previous to this explanation she gave the most affecting description of her sister's wretchedness at the receipt of his letter, and of the feelings which had determined her on seeking him at Plymouth. She concluded with a most spirited attack on his feelings, mingled with reproaches for

his unaccountable conduct towards her sister, than whom she declared no angel was more virtuous. She had been her inseparable companion from the time he had left her, and never was a being more devoted to another than she was to the man who could so unpardonably suspect, so barbarously fly from her.

She dated it Lisbon, and intended it should be delivered to him as soon as he was well enough to receive it; and also one from Ella, expressive of her state of mind. This was according to a plan the sisters had laid on their journey, by which they meant to prepare the Major to expect them; and, as far as was possible, without being certain of the stimulus of his conduct, explain every circumstance of their own. Ella, too, wrote her long meditated epistle, which was deposited with her sister's, to be ready to present when prudence would admit of it.

Ella's appeal to her husband's heart ran thus:

"In what language can I address him who has outraged my affections, tortured my heart, and injured me to the last degree? who has admitted suspicions that could lead him to act in a manner, which nothing but the confirmation of determined guilt in the object who excited it could justify or excuse. In what language should I address the husband, who has returned the purest, most innocent, most virtuous love, by casting me from his arms; and when I fell in agony at his feet, desiring only to know of what I was accused, spurned me from him, and flew from me while I lay apparently dead! Flew from her whose agony of impatience would not permit her to attend his coming; but tempted her to leave her home, and the protection of the most tender of parents, to seek him whose absence

embittered every moment of existence, and who she could not doubt would receive her with reciprocal delight. But the *reception!*——O! what is my heart made of, that it can still retain any portion of affection for one who has so cruelly wounded it?—Edgar! why have you obliged me to reproach myself for the excess of tenderness which I still feel for you? tenderness, which leads me to overlook all but the conviction that your happiness, as well as mine, is the sacrifice of your unfortunate propensity to a passion which no human being had ever less reason to experience. Never will I rest till I have compelled you to do me justice; and, with the impression of our last interview, still fresh on my mind, I will again enter your presence. Judge of my love, when it can determine me on such a step! but justice to myself, as well as that affection which, after what has

passed, many would deem an excess of weakness, demands that I should hear my accusation from your own lips, and force you to confess how grossly you have insulted me. O Edgar! when I read over what I have written, scarcely can I persuade myself that it *can* be addressed to that once gentle, indulgent, most endearing husband, whose whole study was to promote my happiness! but that he should *merit* such language is indeed the consummation of misery! Have you followed the example of your cruel brother? and must the happiness of my whole family be sacrificed to the caprice and injustice of two beings, who only sought to make themselves beloved, and to secure unbounded sway over our affections, in order to abuse and outrage them?

"But, though female pride and delicacy must in one instance silence reproach and complaint, an injured

wife may speak her feelings, and proclaim them in the presence of the author of her wrongs!

"Yet, not to reproach or torment you, will I seek you, but to convince you of your error, and that you owe the devotion of your future existence in atonement for your unwarrantable cruelty. Edgar! I tremble when I add, that many days will not elapse ere you shall behold me; I could not so long restrain my impatience, but that I wish to prepare you to expect me. Employ the intervening time in expelling from your mind the demon who has destroyed your peace; and let no taint of its noxious influence remain to shake your confidence in

"Your most devoted,

"though most injured,

"WIFE."

Ella was well aware she could strike on no chord more likely to sound in

unison with the feelings she wished to excite, than that which would be touched by the allusion to the " cruel brother," whose conduct towards her family had been an incessant source of sorrow and regret to her husband, and that the idea of having followed *his* example, would awaken his self reproaches. How anxiously did she watch for the symptoms of amendment, which would admit of his receiving those epistolary cordials, which she believed would be more effectual than any thing else in promoting his recovery. She had not heard him utter more than a monosyllable in a whisper since his delirium had left him, he seldom opened his eyes, and profound sighs often escaped his breast. When medicine or food was to be presented to him, Ella retired behind the curtain, and Sarah came forward, as it was frequently necessary, to persuade him for a consider-

able time, before he could be induced to take it.

One morning, when the physician called, he congratulated his patient on being considerably better, assuring him his pulse indicated returning strength; and he advised him, by all means, to endeavour to sit up for a short time. He did not reply, and the doctor added, that he was sorry to see him so low spirited, that he had no doubt of his ultimate recovery, which would be advanced by his exerting himself a little more. The Major only said, he had no desire to rise; and the physician on quitting him, observed, that his debility would certainly increase by his yielding so entirely to it.

Ella, who had been witness to this scene, now questioned whether it would not be better to give him the letters? Still she felt such a dread of the agitation they might produce, that

she dared not venture on such a step; but was pondering on the subject, when she heard her husband in a whisper say, " Sarah!" Sarah was not at that moment in the room, but Ella sat at the head of the bed; she inclined her ear towards him, and he added; " Any letters for me?" for he thought it possible his wife might endeavour to soften him through that medium.

Ella could not answer, but she immediately arose, and hastened to take the letters from the place where they had been deposited, and she displayed them before she approached the bed.

" Give them to me!" cried Edgar, impatiently and *aloud*, for the first time since he had recovered his senses, as he raised himself up in the bed, with more strength than Ella believed he retained. She quickly laid the letters down beside him, fearing he would observe the trembling of her

hand. " Undraw the window curtain, Sarah," he said, " I cannot see; quick, quick——O heaven!" she heard him exclaim, as he recognised the hand writing, when he concealed his face for a few moments.

Ella hurried to her old station behind the foot curtain, in which there was many a rent that permitted her to retain a full view of him. He was attempting to break the seal, but his hands shook so he could not succeed without risk of demolishing the writing. " Sarah, Sarah," he cried, " try to open this letter for me—I shall tear it to pieces." Ella dared not appear, the increased light might have discovered her, and her agitation was as great as his. He still tried to open the letter, while he again called Sarah, but he had now succeeded. His face flushed as he perused the contents, and he frequently fell back on the pillow, and pressed his hands on

his temples; but soon again he cast his eyes upon the lines which bore such a stamp of conscious innocence. They breathed the very tone and character of injured virtue; and fervent, though abused, affection; and wrought conviction even against the evidence of the senses. Ella was in an agony of alarm from the agitation that he betrayed, and nothing but that, and the apprehension that his life might be the forfeit, could have withheld her from flying to his arms.

He imagined himself to be alone, and when he came to the expression —"*your cruel brother*," he repeated it aloud, and the tears burst from his eyes. Ella's had long been streaming, and greatly did she rejoice to see his feelings thus relieved, as she thought how perfectly she knew the heart she had so successfully worked on. When he read her resolution to come to him, he seemed suspended between hope

and fear, joy and anguish; and as he repeated " your devoted wife," he snatched the paper to his lips, as if irresistibly impelled to do so.

He reperused the letter several times from the beginning to the end, and appeared to have forgotten Honoria's, which Ella was most anxious he should read, as it was more explanatory and particular than her's. But he seemed to have overlooked it, till the entrance of Sarah forced him to put a check on his feelings. He then broke the seal of the second letter, and read it with the deepest attention: it convinced him of every thing he wished to believe, and the more he reflected, the clearer did the truth appear. Honoria had never quitted her sister! *that* in itself was sufficient to establish her innocence.

On seeing Honoria at Plymouth he concluded she had been staying in the neighbourhood, where he knew they

had acquaintances, and had joined her sister there, being totally ignorant of her imprudence. He now remembered that he had arrived at the inn, in the vicinity of Sir Francis's house, between one and two o'clock in the morning; that it had been still dark when he had recovered his senses, and for a considerable time after he had seen the chaise drive off with his wife in it. Now as at that time of the year it was broad day-light between three and four o'clock, here was proof positive that he could not have remained long insensible; and that, as Honoria asserted in her letter, they had not been above an hour at the person's house, who had practised the stratagem to detain them. *Who* that was the Major was well aware of, and all his fury was turned against Sir Francis, whose villanous intentions he questioned not.

The manner in which he repeatedly

re-perused both the letters, turning from one to the other, then for a moment depositing them in his bosom, and again taking them forth to review their contents, with a revived and animated aspect, left Ella no room to doubt that her most sanguine expectations were fulfilled. She perceived him, at length, clasp his hands together, as he drew himself down beneath the bed clothes, which concealed his face, and she was convinced he was returning thanks for the blessed reverse in his fate.

In a few minutes he again sat up, and called to Sarah in so cheerful a tone as to make her start, so long was it since she had heard him speak out of a whisper. He bade her send Barnet to him, as he meant to get up directly, for the doctor had advised it. He then asked her to give him the looking-glass out of his dressing case, and, on surveying himself, appeared

quite shocked at his appearance, exclaiming, " what a hideous wretch I look! Barnet must cut my hair directly. O! what a dreadful beard! it is enough to frighten a female. Sarah I wonder you do not run away from me."

Sarah was so astonished at the alteration in her master, that for a few moments she was struck dumb, and then poured forth her delight at seeing him so much better, while her eyes continually glanced towards Ella, and had not the Major been fully occupied with his private meditations, he might have perceived, by Sarah's manner, that there was a *third* person, (and one deeply interested about him) in the room. The door was near Ella's place of ambush, and she escaped at the same time with Sarah, and hastened to inform her sister of the success of their plan, and consult her respecting the propriety of immediately

discovering herself, as she felt as if it would be impossible she could remain any longer incognito in the presence of her Edgar.

Honoria participated in the most lively manner in her sister's delight, but advised her not again to venture into her husband's chamber, till they had ascertained how he found himself after rising; observing, that the agitation he had already gone through, was probably as much as he could sustain, without injury, in one day. Having sat up for about an hour and *talked* of eating a good dinner, he became very languid, and was glad to recline on the bed for the remainder of the day. As his spirits and strength gave way, he began to entertain a thousand groundless apprehensions, and to persuade himself it was impossible he ever could be allowed to experience such extreme happiness as the reunion with his Ella would afford him; and

quite exhausted, he relapsed into a state of depression, though bliss, compared to what he had endured. On receiving an exact account of his situation, the sisters agreed that he must be no more agitated on that day, and Ella resolved once more to take up her position on the mattress, where she had reposed so many nights without even undressing.

As he was now well enough to look about him, she ventured not to his apartment till it was dark, as he now objected to the window being shaded from an idea that it obstructed the air. The lamp was placed at a distance, and Ella perceiving that he was in a calm and peaceful sleep, blessed Heaven for it, and stretched herself upon her lowly bed. The portion of tranquillity that had returned to her breast, inclined her to repose after the successive nights in which her slumbers had been broken. But just as

she was composing herself, Edgar moved, and she perceived him looking down on her, as he said in a tone of surprise;—" Sarah, my good creature! there is not the least occasion for your watching by me now! I am afraid you have often done so during my illness, Barnet should have performed that office." Ella's only alternative was to pretend to be sleeping. The Major was deceived, and whispering; " Poor creature! your dear mistress will bless you for this:" he again reposed on his pillow. But Ella's inclination for sleep had vanished, and it was long are she could still the tumultuous throbbing of her heart, or court forgetfulness; and when at length, she obtained a short oblivion, she started from it alarmed, thinking, or rather dreaming she heard her Edgar groan. She raised herself on her knees to look at him, but he was perfectly quiet, yet she

continued to watch him till quite overcome with sleep, her head sunk on the bed without her being sensible of it, and she rested unconsciously till awakened by some one calling, "Sarah, Sarah!" in a loud and terrified voice, as she felt her arm strongly grasped.

She sprung on her feet, looking wildly about her: day-light illumined the chamber. She seized her bonnet which lay on a chair near the bed, and pulling it over her face, ventured to look at her husband. He was sitting up in the bed, staring around him, as if eager to convince himself he was awake; then rubbing his eyes violently, he repeated; "Sarah, Sarah, I am still delirious; my poor brain is wandering, and the illusion is so strong upon me I cannot shake it off. I thought I saw you leaning your head on the side of the bed *there*, exactly on that spot, and as the day-light gleamed

on your face, I could have sworn it was my wife's. I looked again and again, and still the delusion continued! I have it even now so strong upon my mind, I can almost fancy that I see her still. Look up, Sarah, let me behold your features! it horrors me to think I am still so entirely a prey to deception."

Ella again sunk on her knees, and hid her face on the bed. "Poor creature, she is still overcome with sleep," thought the Major, who now began to think he had recovered his senses; when he felt a soft and trembling hand gently laid on his, and heard a convulsive sob escape the breast of the supposed Sarah. A cry of joy accompanied the violent start that shook his frame. He clasped the trembling hand between both of his—then looked at it—then snatched it to his lips and to his bosom, and forcibly drew

towards him the object that excited such a tumult of emotion.

Ella cast off her bonnet, and regarding him for an instant with unutterable tenderness; and could only articulate, " my husband," as she fell upon his neck, and once more found a home in those arms which now strained her to a heart throbbing, with rapture indescribable, pure, and unalloyed; for at a moment like that, self-reproach and contrition, were overwhelmed by the tide of excessive joy.

CHAPTER XXI.

Her lofty courser in the court below,
(Who his majestic rider seems to know,)
Proud of his purple trappings paws the ground,
And champs the golden bit, and spreads the foam around.

VIRGIL.

HONORIA was at her toilet, when her sister entered the apartment to reassume her own dress—Ella's joyous countenance immediately announced that the happy denouement had at length taken place. She rapidly related the interesting circumstances of the discovery, and repeated all that her husband had since told her, explanatory of the prepossession which

had actuated his conduct. She was as much shocked as surprised, on learning from him that she had actually been at the house of Sir Francis Heathcote, and her astonishment would have convinced Edgar, had he harboured a single remaining doubt, that she was indeed ignorant of whose house it was they had been detained at; thus Honoria had reason to rejoice in the foresight which had actuated her to conceal that circumstance from her sister. Ella confessed, that she still felt some degree of uneasiness, lest their having been at Sir Francis's house might transpire, and be circulated through the servants; and she also feared, that when Edgar should have leisure to reflect, he would meditate chastising the Baronet.

Honoria blamed her for anticipating any evil of that nature, and reminded her, that the servants who

had been employed in the affair were confidential emissaries of Sir Francis's, and that their silence, on his account, might be depended on; neither was it in their power to report any thing to her disadvantage, if they kept strictly to the truth, as they were aware that a stratagem had been practised, and also that its design had proved abortive. The most prudent plan to be adopted by all parties was to bury the affair in oblivion, and endeavour to forget all the uneasiness it had occasioned.

As soon as Edgar was up, he expressed a wish to see Honoria; but said, he hoped she would not treat him as he deserved. Ella repeated his words to her sister, and added an entreaty, that she would not be unkind to him. But that was superfluous; for Honoria immediately went to his apartment, and approached him

with looks of affection, and an extended hand.

" *Can* you hold out your hand to me?" he said, as he clasped it with fervour. She presented him her cheek, and as he pressed his lips to it, he added, " Dear girl! you must hate the very name of Burlington." Honoria coloured, and the Major regretted the allusion that had escaped him.

" I can never hate it, while you are called by it," she returned. He sighed, but Ella's smiles soon chased away every unpleasant remembrance, and the scene assumed that most delightful cast which was the natural result of new-born happiness; and Honoria remained one of the group, till Ella insisted on Edgar's lying down for a short time, and ceasing to converse.

Honoria could now with pleasure address a letter to her mother, which

she did, informing her they were once more under the Major's protection; that his health was again somewhat impaired, but that they should set off for England, as soon as he could venture to undertake the journey; she filled up her letter with some incidents relative to their travels in that country, the account of her foundling, Chico, &c.; and hoped, while she prevented her mother's suspecting that any thing unpleasant had happened, she should continue to entertain her.

Honoria now felt at liberty to pay some attention to the scene around her. They were now left sole possessors of their large wandering residence, for the army had advanced further into the heart of Spain, and none remained in that village but those whose situation incapacitated them from moving. Honoria's knowledge of the environs was confined to

a large green behind the house, where Rinaldo was now daily led out, being much further advanced in his convalescence than his master. There, attended by her constant Chico, Honoria frequently repaired, and found her horse, and her dog, much more entertaining and interesting companions, than many human creatures would have proved, Jonathan Irby, for example, *horrible* Jonathan Irby! But she soon became desirous of extending her rambles; for the days were now growing rather tedious to her, as she was deprived of the means of pursuing her ordinary occupations. The Major was perfectly satisfied, if he could remain the whole day long with his head resting on his wife's shoulder; and Honoria thought they did not want her continual presence to complete their happiness, so did not spend a great deal of her time in the invalid's chamber, and wandered

over and over the same ruinous places till she became very tired of them. She had a great deal too much leisure for reflection, for the less she had to occupy her mind, the oftener did it recur to an object she wished to banish from it for ever.

Ella and the Major, aware that she must find her situation extremely irksome, were anxious to devise some means of promoting her amusement; and on Barnet's observing to his master, that Rinaldo wanted gentle exercise, Edgar proposed that Honoria should ride him; and Barnet was dispatched to Salamanca, to try if he could procure a side-saddle. He succeeded in obtaining something resembling one, and Honoria did not find fault with it; for she was delighted with the idea of mounting Rinaldo, which she did the very earliest opportunity, and felt quite triumphant on the occasion. But the whole

time she was out, she thought only of the day when *Rinaldo* displayed himself to such advantage in the park at Edenvale. Certain it is, the gallant steed, however interesting in himself, was obliged to his original master for many of the caresses that were bestowed upon him, and the consequence he was made of on all occasions.

Every evening Honoria now took a short airing, but always on the skirts of the plain; for Barnet gave such a description of the opposite direction, that scarcely any thing would have tempted her to traverse it; as it still displayed objects of the most horrible and disgusting nature; for the last rights due to the heroes who had fallen had been very imperfectly performed, and in some instances entirely neglected. This always deterred Honoria from proceeding towards Salamanca, and she generally turned at

the end of a couple of miles for fear of fatiguing Chico, who kept close to Rinaldo s heels.

A party of the Major's regiment remained at Salamanca, and on learning where he was, two of the officers came out to see him. One of them was a married man, and his wife had just joined him from Lisbon, and now accompanied him. The Major would rather they had remained away, for he had all the society he wished for; but Honoria was not sorry to see some new faces. In the course of conversation she expressed her hopes that she might be able to visit Salamanca, and devote a short time to the inspection of a place so well worthy of attention. The next day a note arrived from the lady, soliciting Miss Valency to spend a short time with her, when she might gratify her desire of viewing the town, &c. The Major and Ella advised her to

accept the invitation, and Honoria was very well inclined, for her object was to gratify a laudable curiosity; and it was agreed she should ride over the ensuing evening, and an answer was returned accordingly.

Honoria now consulted Barnet on how they could avoid that part of the plain which was most obnoxious; when he assured her they might do so with great ease, by taking a circuit of a few miles, with which he was perfectly acquainted. The Major insisted on her retaining Rinaldo, and her attendant, during her absence, as she might find them useful, and would then have the means of returning when she chose. Ella was well pleased that her sister had the prospect of spending a short time agreeably, and only wished that chance might present to her (however improbable) some object calculated to put her ungrateful brother-in-law out of her head and heart for ever.

CHAPTER XXII.

'Tis night; and glittering o'er the trampled heath,
Pale gleams the moonlight on the field of death,
Lights up each well-known spot where late in blood,
The vanquish'd yielded, and the victor stood;
When red in clouds the sun of battle rode,
And pour'd on Britain's front its favouring flood.
GRENVILLE'S PORTUGAL.

SOON after dinner the ensuing day (the weather being too hot to allow them to tempt a meridian sun) Rinaldo was led out, and Honoria mounted, and followed by Barnet, leaving her portmanteau behind him, set off for Salamanca, distant about six miles the straight way. They had not proceeded more than *one*, when Honoria observed that Chico was with

them. As she did not wish him to be one of the party, she had ordered him to be shut up, which Barnet now declared he had been, but suppossed he had got out of the window; however, it was too far to go back with him, and Honoria bade Barnet take him up and carry him, as they could not confine themselves to his pace, having so considerable a distance to perform. They skirted the plain for some miles, in order to cross far from the scene of carnage; Honoria frequently inquired of her attendant, if it was not time to take a new direction; but he, confident of his capacity as guide, assured her they might yet be in danger of encountering the objects they wished to avoid; they therefore continued to proceed as he advised, till Honoria observed that the evening seemed extremely gloomy. Some casual circumstance had prevented their set-

ting off as soon as she had intended, but she was greatly surprised, on looking at her watch, to find that it was an hour later than she had imagined. She desired Barnet immediately to conduct her the shortest way to the town, or they should be in danger of being benighted. They set off in a canter across the plain; but a quarter of an hour had scarcely elapsed, when, to Honoria's great terror, they found themselves, almost suddenly involved in total darkness, for in that country there is little twilight, and night surprises the traveller ere he is aware of it. Honoria stopped her horse in alarm. She now found that she had done wrong in trusting to Barnet's knowledge of the country, and that he had consumed the time in which they might have reached Salamanca in wandering out of the way. Still he assured her there was nothing to apprehend,

for that he was perfectly aware of the direction of the town, and if she would allow him to go first, and follow him closely, they should very soon reach their destination in safety. But Honoria's confidence in her escort was destroyed, and she pursued the course he adopted as her only alternative, for she strongly doubted it was the right one.

They proceeded for a considerable time, when she again stopped, calling to him to do the same, observing, that she could neither perceive lights nor any other indication of their being near a town, and she was convinced they were in a wrong direction. That they were fatiguing their horses to death by continuing that pace, and perhaps, after all, were only hastening away from their object. Barnet's confidence in himself now appeared a little shaken, though he still vehemently asserted his knowledge of that

part of the plain, and his certainty that he could not be mistaken, though it was very evident to Honoria that he did not, at that moment, know which way to turn. Her terrors increased; to be in the midst of a waste, without a single clue to guide them, and involved in intense darkness, for it was a thick and cloudy night, was a situation of extreme perplexity, and held out every probability of spending the night in fruitless wandering, or (which Honoria was by no means inclined to) *bivouacing on the plains of Salamanca.*

She now thought the best plan they could adopt, as they knew so little where they were going to, was to endeavour to find their way back; but Barnet at once avowed his inability to retrace their steps, confessing he should not know which way to turn. This was, in reality, acknowledging that he knew nothing at all of where he was.

"Then what is to be done?" cried Honoria, with some impatience. "If we go on slowly, ma'am, I dare say we shall find the town at last," said Barnet, in a dejected tone.

They proceeded very leisurely for some time, when Honoria became sensible of a difference in the atmosphere, which convinced her they were no longer in the midst of the plain. She was glad to perceive the sky clearing, and some stars discernible; and, not long after, to her great joy, the rising moon appeared above the horizon, and soon emitted sufficient light to render perceptible the objects around them; when they found themselves on the borders of a thick wood!

CHAPTER XXIII.

They cannot find the path which first was showne,
But wander to and fro in waies unknowne;
Farthest from end then, whey they nearest weene,
That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne;
So many paths, so many turnings seene,
That which of them to take in divers doubt they beene.

SPENCER'S FAIRIE QUEEN.

BARNET evinced great surprise, while Honoria demanded if he had now any idea of where they were? Barnet looked greatly perplexed, as he repeated, "A wood, a wood, I have no recollection of a wood I am sure. Dear me, it is very strange! Where can we be! Indeed, ma'am,

I beg your pardon from my soul, and hope you will excuse me, ma'am, being as I would not have done it, if I could have helped it; but I thought I knew the plain so well, as I have been all over where the troops used to exercise; but, to be sure, it looked so different then. But there seems to be a path cut through this wood, ma'am, shall I go forward a little, and see if I can find any thing like a house?"

Honoria had thrown the reins on Rinaldo's neck, permitting him to graze; it was not among the least of her apprehensions that he might suffer by being kept out so long. But she would not permit Barnet to advance a single step without her; but, having remained stationary long enough to give their horses a short rest and scanty meal, they proceeded a little way into the wood, Honoria resolving to turn back if it should

prove intricate and untrodden. They had not gone far, when they thought they heard the trampling of other horses' feet than their own; they stopped to listen, and rejoiced at finding they were not deceived, as they hoped to meet with friends who would direct them right, or afford them protection.

The path now opened to a considerable space, clear of trees, and as they entered on one side, they saw advancing from the other a party of dragoons; but what a revulsion did Honoria's feelings undergo, when they suddenly advanced with rapidity, and she heard them address each other in French.

She now, for the first time, became aware that it was possible they might fall in with some of the enemy's scouts or foragers, though the main body was at a distance.

The moon was now sufficiently ra-

diant to render every thing conspicuous. Scarcely had Honoria's terrors found place in her mind, before a French officer gallopped up to her, and, gallantly dropping the point of his sword, said, he had the honour and happiness of informing her she was his prisoner. Barnet violently expostulated, and became perfectly enraged; but words were his only weapons, and had he been armed at all points, he could not have done any thing against twenty-five French chasseurs. Becoming aware of his impotence, he, with tears in his eyes, implored the officer, out of respect to the lady, to set them at liberty, observing, that such a conquest was unworthy of him. The officer again made obeisance to the dismayed Honoria, as he replied, "he never could admit *that*."

The fact was, two fine English horses were pretty prizes to this party,

which had been for some time pursuing a sort of warfare similar to that of a regular banditti; plunder and rapine were their objects, and each night they carried on their depredations, but remained in ambush during the day. A young and handsome female too, who appeared to be of a superior order, was a prisoner the officer could not think of resigning. When she had sufficiently recovered her dismay to find utterance, she endeavoured, by urgent supplications, to obtain her liberty, but he remained perfectly inexorable in regard to her, though he said her attendant might go if he pleased; but *that* Honoria would not permit, neither would Barnet have quitted her on any consideration. Scarcely could Honoria credit the evidence of her senses, when she found herself riding along escorted by a party of French dragoons, and compelled to support the fulsome

gallantry of their officer, who rode beside her; but who, to do him justice, tempered his assiduities with that respect her manner irresistibly commanded. In reply to her inquiry of where she was to be conducted to, he informed her that he was then on his way to join the main army; but, as his party was weak, he could not venture to proceed by day, but hoped the second night would bring them to head-quarters, from whence, he assured her, she would find means of informing her friends of her situation.

Honoria began to think she was at least fortunate in having met with a man who certainly wished to appear polite. But her heart sunk within her when she reflected on her situation, and what might probably ensue —a state of captivity, perhaps for a tedious time, and heaven only knew under what circumstances, or what difficulties might be thrown in the

way of her obtaining her liberty. And Rinaldo! her dear Rinaldo! would be taken from her; he would become the victor's prize, and the odious Frenchman have the honour of being borne by the steed that had carried Spencer Burlington!

As she further contemplated the appalling prospect of a lengthened separation from the friends she so tenderly loved, and thought of the anguish they must endure on her account, her spirits, which had supported her through so many trying circumstances, sunk entirely, and she was no longer able to repel the anticipation of evils of the most distressing nature. Reflecting on the series of unhappiness she had experienced for the last six months, and the succession of perverse incidents which had occurred during that time, she believed herself marked out for misfortune, and thought she could

have resigned existence without a sigh.

After proceeding for some time, they halted to refresh their horses, from which they descended, and Honoria sat down at the root of a tree, Barnet keeping close to her. She took Chico on her lap, and wept over him as all that she had left. She could not bear to look at Rinaldo, whom she could no longer consider as her own; and towards Barnet she felt very uncharitable, as being the cause of her present misery. A plan suddenly struck her, by which she hoped to keep possession of the favourite; and she told the officer, that if she might be permitted to retain her horse, she could promise him any remuneration he might think equivalent to its value, as soon as she had the means of communicating with her friends. He affected to have no intention of depriving her of it, but the

admiration he had expressed of the beautiful animal, and the manner in which he had observed his movements, convinced her he had been thinking what a delightful charger he would make for himself. However, she did not appear to mistrust him, but, to her great annoyance, she found that whatever indulgence she might be allowed, she would be expected to make a suitable return for.

On again proceeding, they journeyed till day-break, when they penetrated through the thickest part of the forest, which was attainable to the horses; and, having gained a clear spot, the men lay down to sleep, while the horses grazed near them. The officer informed his prisoner that they should not advance again till sun-set, and spreading his cloak for her at a considerable distance from where the men lay, he recommended her to lie down, assuring her she

might feel perfectly secure, as he would watch over her incessantly. This she begged leave to decline, and said she should feel much more comfortable if permitted to remain apart from every one but her own servant; and she should be sorry to prevent the *commandant* from seeking the repose he must require. He assumed a resentful aspect, and said, with asperity, that she must have a very poor opinion of the value they set on their prisoners, if she imagined they would all go to sleep, and permit her quietly to make her escape. Honoria assured him she had no idea of the kind. He then observed, regarding Barnet, who kept continually near her, that it was very unusual for a lady to have her servant constantly at her elbow, as if he were her companion; and that he could not help feeling it an affront to himself, as he could not approach her without com-

ing in contact with her domestic, and he should not permit of it any longer.

Honoria felt alarmed beyond measure, but thought it better to affect to confide in him, and if possible to conciliate him, and she returned, that she was convinced that he as a man of honour and delicacy, which she could not doubt him to be, must be aware of the unpleasantness of her situation, and she hoped he would indulge her to retain her servant near her, and he was the only person she had a right to order, and——

" He interrupted her by begging a thousand pardons, entreated she would say no more, that he was fully sensible of the justice of every thing she had represented, and if she would only give him her parole of honour, that she would make no attempt to escape, she was at liberty to seek a more retired spot within a short distance, where she could remain entirely

alone, and where he hoped she might obtain some repose.

She really felt grateful for this unexpected indulgence, and the manner in which it was proffered, banished distrust. She proceeded till she gained a spot out of sight of the party, though not out of hearing of Barnet, whom she commanded not to stir from the place where she left him, when sitting down with her back against a tree, she resigned herself to her melancholy contemplations.

A considerable time had elapsed when she thought she heard a rustling among the bushes, and looking up she perceived the French officer peeping from behind the tree she was leaning against. He darted forward, but not quicker than she sprung up, and when he would have detained her, she screamed, " Barnet!" in such a piercing voice, which was promptly answered in a rougher tone, that the art-

ful Frenchman was glad to release her, and he flung her hand from him, uttering maledictions, as he hastily retired the way he came. Barnet was now within a few paces of his mistress, and she took good care not to lose sight of him again. She was provoked with herself for having been so easily imposed on by the apparent candour and propriety of the Frenchman's manner, but her distress was completed by this convincing proof that he was not to be relied on, or any kind of confidence placed in his honour. He did not approach her again during that day, but appeared extremely sullen and out of humour, and her strongest terrors were excited by the apprehension that he would remove Barnet from about her. In short, the horrors of her situation seemed momentarily increasing, and she passed the day, a day tedious beyond all others, in a state of hopeless

wretchedness. She was supplied with provisions, but of such a description that she could with difficulty force down a portion sufficient to sustain nature. The sun at length declined, and they recommenced their joyless way, Honoria auguring every thing that was bad from the determined silence of the lieutenant, who resumed his station beside her, though he spoke not.

She was very glad when the rising of the moon dispelled the obscurity in which they for some time proceeded over a tract of country, varying from wood to plain, from hill to vale.. The full effulgence of the friendly planet now displayed an extensive grove, where stately forest trees rose at distinct distances, their waving branches forming various shadows that would have interested a mind more tranquil than Honoria's.

Every thing appeared so placid, so

serene, so noiseless, that it seemed like profanation to disturb the solitude of the grove by the tread of the war-horse and the rattling of his gaudy trappings. They were proceeding at a full trot, when the sudden, and not far distant, blast of a bugle, had the instantaneous power of turning every Frenchman at the same moment. Not to take flight, but rapidly to fall into their places, and await the commands of their officer, who looked vainly around him for a place of ambush. "If they are foes," he cried,—you must conquer or be conquered, for there is no retreating."

The war-horn ceas'd, but lake and hill,
Were busy with its echo still.

END OF VOL. II.

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